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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who locked the oceans in their vast reservoirs, we honor Your glorious Name.

Lord, Your power has sustained our Nation in the past, and we place our future in Your hands. Each day we are inspired by the splendor of Your holiness. We see Your handiwork in the glory of the sunrise and the majesty of the sunset.

Lord, continue to rule in the lives of our lawmakers. Do not turn a deaf ear to their prayers, as they seek to do Your will. Be for them their strength and shield during these challenging days. May they continue to find in You a future and a hope.

We pray in Your amazing Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 21, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, Speaker PELOSI and I put in motion the path to pass a continuing resolution that in one fell swoop would accomplish four very important things. It would keep the government open through December 3 of this year and avoid a needless and dangerous shutdown. It would provide emergency funding to help resettle Afghan evacuees; it would approve tens of billions of dollars in disaster aid funding; and it will suspend the debt ceiling until December of 2022, commensurate with the time necessary to cover the debt of the bipartisan \$908 billion emergency COVID-relief bill passed at the end of last year.

Now, today, I want to spend some time focusing on the last of these items, addressing the debt limit to avoid a first-ever default in American history.

Throughout modern history, addressing the debt ceiling has consistently been done on a bipartisan basis. Let me repeat that. Throughout modern history, addressing the debt ceiling has consistently been done on a bipartisan basis. Since 1960, the debt ceiling has been raised approximately 80 times under both Republican and Democratic administrations and under both unified and divided government. So much for

the argument by Leader MCCONNELL that when all three branches are controlled by one party, the debt ceiling ought to be their exclusive domain. That is not what history has shown, and that is not what happened actually in 2017 when Donald Trump was President, MCCONNELL was majority leader, and MCCARTHY was Republican Speaker—I believe it was MCCARTHY back then—but the debt ceiling was renewed bipartisan.

To do otherwise, to not do the debt ceiling in a bipartisan way, has been considered unthinkable because the consequences for the economy, for the American people, and for our standing on the world stage would be too severe.

Senate Republicans and the Republican leader, however, are again engaging in fantastical feats of sophistry to justify why this time is somehow different. We know it is not. We all know the truth. Democrats and Republicans both had a hand in approving the spending we now must pay.

Look, we know the Republican justification for forcing a default is totally dishonest, plain and simple. Don't ask me; just listen to the Wall Street Journal. Here is what it said:

Congress would still need to raise the debt limit this fall even if no new major spending programs were enacted.

This idea that they don't want to raise the debt ceiling to deal with future spending is just totally false. Ask the Wall Street Journal.

The fact is, our continuing resolution would suspend the debt limit through December of 2022, an amount of time commensurate with the debt incurred as a result of passing the bipartisan \$908 billion emergency COVID relief legislation in December of last year. Remember, that legislation was drafted by Republicans, voted for by Republicans, and put on the floor by Leader MCCONNELL, who voted for it, and signed by a Republican President. Democrats worked with our colleagues to pass this bill because it was the right thing to do for our families, our

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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small businesses, and suffering communities.

Our CR is now carefully tailored—carefully tailored—to account for this debt. This is as reasonable as it gets. So for Republicans to suddenly throw their hands in the air and abscond from their responsibility to pay debt that they proudly supported is nothing short of a dine-and-dash of historic proportions.

Republicans racked trillions of dollars of debt under President Trump and are demanding American families foot the bill. What will this do? It could stop payments to Social Security recipients. It could stop payments to veterans. It could raise interest rates, making a mortgage or car loan more expensive. It could cause local governments to pay more in interest, and that might mean increased taxes for people. This is playing with fire. Playing games with the debt ceiling is playing with fire and putting it on the backs of the American people.

Of course, there is a very quick and easy way to make sure we avoid all of this from becoming even a possibility. Republicans simply don't have to vote to force a default. It is that simple.

Democrats will do the right thing and the responsible thing when the continuing resolution comes for a vote on the floor. We will see who among the Republican conference will do likewise.

NOMINATION OF ROHIT CHOPRA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, in addition to keeping our government open and maintaining our government's full faith and credit, Senate Democrats will also continue working this week on confirming even more of President Biden's nominees to the bench and to his administration.

For the information of my colleagues, later today, I will move to file a discharge petition on the nomination of Rohit Chopra to serve as Director of the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau. In the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, the CFPB was created under the Obama administration with a simple mandate: protect American consumers from predatory financial practices.

Rohit Chopra is the right man to lead this Agency after it languished under the Presidency of Donald Trump. Trump didn't really care about the average person being taken advantage of by the big financial institutions, despite his claim he is a working-class President. Mr. Chopra, on the other hand, has a long history of defending student loan borrowers from unscrupulous for-profit colleges and already served in the CFPB under President Obama, where he was defending the rights of middle-class people who might be taken advantage of by rapacious financial institutions. He has the experience; he has the dedication; and he will have the support of Senate Democrats when his nomination is

brought to the floor this afternoon or later this week.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, over the next few weeks, Senate Democrats will also move forward on a number of noncontroversial nominees critical to keeping our country safe and advancing American diplomacy abroad.

Over the last few months, there has been a growing backlog on these nominees due to Republican obstructionism, and it is our hope, starting this week, we can move to secure their confirmation.

But, last week, a number of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle announced they will seek to delay these nominees for no other reason than to score cheap political points in an effort to win fans on the far right. It is no secret. People leading this are all competing to run for President on the Republican side in 2024, and they are in feverish—feverish—pursuit of the extreme right in this country, which they think will help them win a primary. So they tie this Chamber in a knot but, more importantly, jeopardize the security of Americans.

This is unacceptable. Every one of these nominees won bipartisan, if not unanimous, support in committee. That same level of support should continue on the floor. The Republicans who are delaying the confirmation of these nominees are deliberately making the American people less safe—less safe on the foreign policy side, where we need nominees to the Defense and State Departments, and less safe on the domestic side as well, where there is talk of holding up U.S. attorneys who are in charge of prosecuting Federal laws in all the States.

Under normal circumstances, all of these nominees should be dispensed with speedily and without controversy, but because of the self-interest of a few obstructionists, the Senate could be forced to drag out what is normally a simple process.

I urge these colleagues to drop their theatrics immediately and allow these nominees to these critical Agencies to go through.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now a quick update on voting rights. Last week, several of my colleagues introduced the Freedom to Vote Act, a powerful new bill that would tackle head-on voter suppression, partisan gerrymandering, and the scourge of dark money.

The legislation also responds to recommendations from election officials and includes new provisions to boost confidence in our elections, including critical anti-election subversion reforms, a flexible voter ID standard, and commonsense voter list maintenance requirements. This legislation will promote greater confidence in our elec-

tions, and I believe all Senators—Democrat, Republican, and Independent alike—should support the package.

At the end of last week, I moved to place the Freedom to Vote Act on the legislative calendar, enabling me to schedule a vote on this bill in the immediate future.

This week, my colleague Senator MANCHIN, who helped craft this legislation and relied on many of the good practices in West Virginia to do so—Senator MANCHIN, this week, is making an effort, a good-faith effort, to reach colleagues on the other side of the aisle to win support of the Freedom to Vote Act, and, in fact, he has been meeting with a number of Republican colleagues.

We are committed to finding common ground, if there is common ground to be found. We look forward to hearing what changes Republicans might want to make. And if Republicans engage earnestly and honestly, we will work with them. The voting rights working group I convened earlier this year is prepared to help in that effort, but we need to move quickly. Time is of the essence.

As Senator MANCHIN said earlier this year regarding congressional action on voting rights, "Inaction is not an option." I agree with Senator MANCHIN in that regard.

To that end, it is my intention to hold a vote for the Freedom to Vote Act here on the Senate floor. If Republicans are unwilling to move forward, Democrats will have to move on our own. Inaction from Republicans on voting rights is not an excuse to do nothing. We are going to take action to make sure we protect our democracy and fight back against the disease of voter suppression, partisan gerrymandering, and election subversion that is metastasizing at the State level.

HAITI

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, and finally on Haiti, we have all seen these horrible images coming from our southern border as Haitian asylum seekers, simply looking to escape tyranny and the problems, that they have sought—have been met at our doorstep with unimaginable indignity.

Images of Haitian migrants being hit with whips and other forms of physical violence is completely unacceptable. This behavior must be addressed, and we must provide accountability. The images turn your stomach. It must be stopped, this kind of violence.

Right now, I am told there are four flights scheduled to deport these asylum seekers back to a country that cannot receive them. Such a decision defies common sense. It also defies common decency and what America is all about. Remember that lady in the harbor in the city in which I live.

So I urge President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas to immediately put a stop to these expulsions and to end this

title 42 policy at our southern border. We cannot continue these hateful and xenophobic Trump policies that disregard our refugee laws. We must allow asylum seekers to present their claims at our ports of entry and be afforded due process.

I commit to work with this administration to provide resources so that we can establish safe, orderly, and humane processes for those seeking protections. Again, the policies that are being enacted now and the horrible treatment of these innocent people who have come to the border must stop immediately.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDER—S. 2765

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leader is correct.

The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2765) to provide that Members of Congress may not receive pay after October 1 of any fiscal year in which Congress has not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget and passed the regular appropriations bills.

Mr. SCHUMER. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

TAXES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the senior House Democrat told us back in March of 2020 that COVID presented “a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision.”

President Biden said last week that “while this pandemic has been godawful for so many reasons . . . it does present us with an opportunity.”

The reckless taxing-and-spending spree that Washington Democrats are assembling behind closed doors would put more debt, more borrowing, and

more inflation on the shoulders of American families. It would make Washington, DC, dramatically more involved in families’ childcare, their health coverage, their local energy utilities, and on and on.

There are so many controversial changes being crammed into one mega bill that it must be a deliberate strategy: try to achieve everything the far left has wanted for 20 years in one fell swoop before the country has time to realize what hit it.

So today, I am going to focus on just one example. Let’s look at the tax hikes, a staggering historic set of tax hikes; tax hikes on small business, tax hikes on family farms, tax hikes on Americans that would shatter the pledge to spare people earning less than \$400,000 a year, tax hikes that would put even more Americans into unfair double taxation of the death tax, massive taxes on the U.S. economy that would give us one of the least competitive tax structures in the developed world.

For example, even Communist China taxes their own businesses significantly less than President Biden and his allies want America to tax ours.

Tax hike after tax hike after tax hike—a smothering wet blanket thrown onto an economy that is already struggling to fully recover because of the inflation and worker shortages that Democrats’ policies have already unleashed.

So when you add it all up, Democrats want to ram through one of the largest peacetime tax hikes on record, if not the single largest. So let me say that again. Behind closed doors, Washington Democrats are drafting what may very well be the largest peacetime tax hike that our country has literally ever seen.

But this isn’t to say that nobody gets a leg up in this bill. So listen to this. Somehow, mysteriously, many of the Democrats’ favorite groups and special interests come out just fine. Isn’t that fascinating?

For example, their legislation would allow ordinary Americans’ charitable deduction on top of the standard deduction to expire. Ah, but they would replace it with a brandnew tax break of almost exactly the same dollar amount for union dues that go to Big Labor. So you take out a charitable deduction for regular Americans, put in a new one for union dues that would benefit Big Labor. They are scrapping Americans’ extra deduction for donating to charity and replacing it with a special subsidy for union dues for Big Labor.

Really, you can’t make this stuff up. Sorry, Red Cross. Sorry, local churches and houses of worship. Sorry, soup kitchens. Democrats think the Teamsters and the SEIU need the money more than you do.

And they aren’t the only group that Democrats favor, who literally make out like bandits. Look at high-income earners in coastal blue States. The bill that raises taxes on everything that

moves somehow—somehow—makes room for a special, gigantic tax cut for wealthy people who choose to live in high-tax States. More than half the benefit of the so-called SALT policy would go to the top 1 percent of households.

There is also a special tax break for people who choose to purchase expensive electric cars. You get the picture: make U.S. industry less competitive than China in order to massively subsidize the coastal cosmopolitan lifestyle. That is what the Democrats want.

This bill would also create a new national dragnet for ordinary Americans’ banking information. Community banks and credit unions would be hammered with new requirements to report to the feds whenever citizens make transactions—listen to this—in excess of \$600. Community banks and credit unions would have new requirements to report to the Federal Government whenever citizens make transactions in excess of \$600.

Big Brother wants to peer into America’s bank accounts. Here is how one local Kentucky lender described this concept to me: a “flagrant violation of privacy and offense to liberty.”

That pretty well sums it up. So, huge tax hikes on Americans, expensive giveaways for coastal elites, and new government snooping—snooping—into families’ finances.

So that is just one corner of this reckless taxing-and-spending spree that should never see the light of day.

ELECTIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a different matter. Last week, Senate Democrats announced what was marketed as a compromise on carving out a bigger role for Washington in elections all across our country.

It was hardly the first time our Democratic colleagues had given their takeover of 50 States’ election laws a makeover. Over the years, it has sometimes been sold as an urgent overhaul of our democracy; other times as just a set of narrow tweaks. But for all of their attempts to change up the pitch, the unfortunate fact is that the bones of the Democrats’ proposal are still the same.

The latest version is only a compromise in the sense that the center left compromised with the far left. Under the hood is the same Frankenstein’s monster that has been there since 2019, years—years—before the State-level actions which Democrats now claim have made it all necessary.

It still makes Washington bureaucrats the de facto board of elections for all 50 States, dictating the terms of things like automatic and same-day voter registration. It still insists on impeding State efforts to ensure integrity of voter rolls through popular, commonsense voter ID measures. It still has government dollars going directly to politicians’ campaigns—that

is the public funds for bumper stickers and attack ads. It still empowers partisan regulators to circumvent the bipartisan FEC and engage in even more intimidation of private citizens who engage in political speech. And these, of course, are just to name a few.

Now, surely, as the Senate continues to do its job and strike down misguided ideas like these, we will hear plenty from folks who consider it evidence that this body is broken. But, of course, that simply is not true. The Senate is fully capable of taking landmark, bipartisan action that makes it easier to vote and harder to cheat.

Back in 2002, I was involved, along with my colleague Chris Dodd, in passing the Help America Vote Act. I was one of the leaders on that. We empowered State and local election systems to follow commonsense guideposts for integrity and accessibility. It provided basically a grant program to States to help them upgrade their voter systems after the Florida election in 2000. And the Senate passed it 92 to 2—92 to 2.

So if our Democratic colleagues really want to find common ground and act on common sense, the roadmap is right there. But, unfortunately, we know that has never been the case.

Unfortunately, this latest “compromise” is just a repackaging of what even reporters called a messaging bill that was headed nowhere. The substance is not really changing, so neither will the result.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Also under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Margaret Irene Strickland, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET IRENE STRICKLAND

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the nomination of Margaret Strickland for the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico.

For nearly 15 years, Ms. Strickland has served the people of New Mexico as a public defender and a civil rights attorney. With her extensive qualifications and distinguished career in public service, Ms. Strickland will make an excellent addition to the New Mexico District Court.

She began her legal career in the Law Offices of the Public Defender for the State of New Mexico, a role in which she handled nearly every type of criminal case. Over the years—and this is an amazing number—she has tried nearly 90 cases. The vast majority of her practice has been in Federal court.

Here in the Senate, Ms. Strickland boasts the strong support of her home State Senators, Senators HEINRICH and LUJÁN. Her nomination also received bipartisan support in our Judiciary Committee. She received a “well qualified” rating from the American Bar Association.

And like so many of the nominees coming from the Biden administration, she really shows professional diversity in her background. As a former public defender and civil rights attorney, she will offer a legal perspective that we often find missing from the bench. She has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to equal justice under the law, and as a judge, she will ensure that every voice is heard in the courtroom.

I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

On another note, Mr. President, in the coming days, this Senate has a historic decision to make and very little time to make it. We have to set aside politics, which the American people are begging us over and over to do, and we have to ensure that our government can continue to function in the midst of this public health crisis and a recovering economy. Now, in any reasonable scenario, these would be noncontroversial and nonpartisan endeavors, but sadly, at this moment in the U.S. Senate, reason is in short supply.

In recent days, some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have indicated that they are prepared to—listen to this—sabotage the routine process of government for political reasons. This could have a catastrophic impact on this Nation.

Last week, Senator McCONNELL reiterated that Republicans will not join Democrats in voting to deal with the debt limit. What exactly does it mean? Well, imagine if you and I just up and decided to stop paying your credit card bills. If Congress fails to raise or suspend the debt limit before the Treasury runs out of cash, our Nation runs the risk of default for the first time in history. That is why lawmakers have to set aside politics, as we have done

nearly 80 times in our history, to keep the government's bills being paid. Truthfully, this shouldn't even be a debate.

Raising or suspending the debt limit has nothing to do with any new programs or new spending. It is about paying off the tab that the government has already incurred. We are receiving the bill at the restaurant after we have had the big meal; the question is whether we will pay it.

Here is the kicker: Much of the debt that the Republicans are threatening not to pay was approved by Senate Republicans when Donald Trump was in the White House. In other words, we are being asked to approve the Trump debt from his years in the Presidency, which largely had the support of the Republicans, and the Republicans are telling us: “Hands off. We won't accept responsibility for the things we voted for during the Trump years.”

The last time Congress suspended the debt limit was in August 2019, a little over halfway through President Trump's term. Between then and the beginning of President Biden's term, congressional Republicans approved \$6 trillion in new debt. In fact, during Trump's one term in office, the national debt ballooned by 36 percent. Fiscal conservatives? During the Trump administration, the national debt ballooned by 36 percent. Well, that surely has happened before in history? No, I am sorry, it has not. That is the fastest it has grown under any President in American history. The Trump years were the biggest debt years in the history of the United States, and now the Republicans don't recognize it. They want to walk away from it.

You may be wondering: For what noble or productive purpose did the Republicans go so deep in debt during the Trump years? Well, a big chunk of it was Donald Trump's tax giveaway to the richest Americans—\$2 trillion—\$2 trillion in tax cuts for people at the superwealthy level in America. And now it is time to say to the Republicans: You voted for those tax cuts. The wealthiest people in America applauded you. Now would you at least step up and admit it?

Nope. Now that it is time for Republicans to pay for the meal that they ate, the political banquet, they are vowing instead to dine and dash. They are taking a page straight from the playbook of Donald Trump, the man who called himself proudly “the king of debt,” a man who didn't pay his own bills as a businessman and who incurred the largest increase in the national debt of any President in history. And in the process, the Republicans—to take this incredible and inexplicable stand—are willing to risk the full faith and credit of the United States.

When it comes to America's debt, default is simply not an option for any rational person. There is not a single American who will emerge unscathed if the Republicans execute this political strategy. Defaulting on our debt

threatens Social Security payments for tens of millions of Americans, it threatens healthcare coverage for tens of millions more, and it could slash benefits for our Nation's veterans. Who could be proud of that vote?

On a national global scale, default would be, in the words of Mark Zandi, Moody's chief economist, "financial Armageddon." It would send markets into free fall and threaten America's status as the world's reserve currency. Imagine that. You say to the seniors: Well, maybe/maybe not on your Social Security payments. And, incidentally, the stocks and the ETFs and the mutual funds and the investments you had for your retirement—hang on tight; they are about to take a huge hit, a hit that is totally avoidable.

Back in 2011, when House Republicans initially refused to raise the debt limit, America's credit rating was downgraded. So what? Interest rates went up, so we are paying more money in interest instead of paying it for things America values—healthcare, education, infrastructure.

Some economists believe that episode hurt consumer confidence and hobbled our economy in the great recession. It also stuck taxpayers with billions of dollars in increased borrowing costs. Think about how fragile America's economy is at this very moment. We are still recovering from a once-in-a-century public health crisis and the worst economic crisis in 75 years. The last thing we need is a self-inflicted crisis that is motivated by partisanship.

Mr. President, right now, our economy has to be our highest priority. We need to come together and get the government funded. We also have an obligation to provide financial relief to Americans who have been hit by the environmental disasters. My State escaped that, but tomorrow that may not be the case. You never know with these extreme weather events. Hurricane Ida was an eye-opener for many parts of this country. People are suffering. Disaster aid for these people is essential.

We need to also help resettle the refugees from Afghanistan. They risked their lives for Americans; we should make a home for them here in the United States.

We also want to make sure that we support our military in every way possible.

Instead of bickering and political brinksmanship, Congress needs to rise to this moment of crisis. The American people sent us to Washington not to manufacture crises but to prevent them. That is exactly why Senate Democrats are moving ahead to put President Biden's Build Back Better plan in place. Pay our debts, invest in a prosperous future—that is our plan. We would love to have Republican support for it. We have a once-in-a-century opportunity to consider working families, middle-income families, struggling families, not the wealthy.

The Build Back Better plan will grow our economy for generations to come.

If fully enacted, it will create a future for every parent to take off work to care for a newborn child. Every high school grad can receive a college education and set their sights on a good-paying job. And every senior citizen can afford prescription drugs they need without dipping into their saving. These investments will make America healthier, happier, stronger, and more prosperous.

And unlike President Trump's giveaway to the rich, President Biden's Build Back Better plan is a prudent investment in our Nation's financial future. We are going to pay for it; that is the Senate Democrats' intent. It will not be added to the deficit.

I look forward to discussing that plan in detail in the weeks to come.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators THUNE, HEINRICH, and LUJÁN be able to complete their remarks prior to the scheduled vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any objection?

Seeing none, without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, there has been a good discussion already on the floor this morning—I was listening to my colleague, the Democratic whip—discussing the upcoming challenges that we face this fall. We have got to fund the government, we are facing the debt limit issue, and of course the Democrats' reckless tax-and-spending-spree proposal that we will have to deal with at some point too.

The issue that has been raised is, why wouldn't Republicans want to help raise the debt limit? And I think the answer is very simple. The Democrats control the entire government here. They control the House, they control the Senate, they control the White House, and they have a procedure here in the Senate that enables them to raise the debt limit with 51 votes. They don't need a single Republican vote to raise the debt limit.

They keep arguing that, well, in the past, there have been, you know, previous times when the debt limit has been a bipartisan issue. And in most cases, those were times, of course, when there was divided government and there was actually negotiation over these issues, which there isn't right now. I mean, this tax-and-spending spree being proposed by the Democrats is the largest expansion of government as a percentage of GDP, I believe, in history—certainly going back to the 1930s.

But there is no question that this is a blowout spending bill that the Democrats have decided to do all on their own. Not a single Republican will vote for it.

And so the debt increase that would accommodate all of that additional spending—the massive amount of spending, in some cases financed with tax increases—but that is another issue, and I am going to get to that in just a minute. But the amount of debt that would be added as a result of the \$3.5 trillion the Democrats want to spend, on top of the \$2 trillion that they spent earlier this year in February—again, done all on Democrat vote; no Republicans participated in that—is a very, very different scenario than when there have been in the past attempts to actually work in a bipartisan way.

My colleague from Illinois mentioned the fact of the increase in the debt under the previous administration—what the level had been, somewhere on the order of 6 or \$6.5 trillion—and I have to remind people that 4.5 trillion of that was negotiated in response to the crisis of the pandemic. And that was a negotiation between Republicans and Democrats, where both sides sat together and said, "We have to do something; we have to react in a quick way, a bold way, to what is happening around the country," and created programs like the PPP program, which helped a lot of small businesses survive, helped with payments to healthcare providers for PPE and other costs to get them through this, money for vaccines, money for people who had been unemployed as a consequence of the pandemic. These were all costs associated with the pandemic that were negotiated in a bipartisan way, Republicans and Democrats working together.

What we have in front of us right now is the Democrats proposing the biggest expansion of government probably in the history of this country. And if you look at what they are calling \$3.5 trillion, a lot of outside groups, like the Committee for Responsible Federal Government, say it is \$5.5 trillion. Either way, it is a massive amount of spending, all of which would dramatically increase the size of the government in this country and people's dependence upon government. I call it the "free everything" bill because, essentially, that is what it is.

What I would simply suggest to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is that if you want to spend \$3.5 trillion or \$5.5 trillion—whatever that number is—and you want to do it with 51 votes, without any discussion or negotiation or attempt to even reach out to Republicans on this, then, you ought to do it.

Republicans were in the room. They negotiated a bipartisan infrastructure bill, \$1.2 trillion, that passed here with 69 votes, and would pass overwhelmingly, I think, in the House, unless coupled with this massive spending bill, and then it would be signed into law by

the President. That is an example of what can happen when you sit down and negotiate.

On this other \$3.5 trillion they have decided to do, they have decided to expand massively the size of the Federal Government, and to do that, they are going to add to the Federal debt. And it seems pretty straightforward, I think—and I think most Americans would understand—that if you control the entire government—the House, the Senate, and the White House—and it is all your spending that is going to be necessary or that is going to be responsible for requiring an increase in the debt limit, then you ought to do it with Democrat votes. I think that is a perfect way of looking at this that would fit with the views of where most Americans are, most of whom, I believe, don't want to see their Federal Government going another \$3.5 trillion into debt or massively expanding the size of the Federal Government at a time when inflation is already out of control.

I want to speak to that because inflation is rapidly becoming a serious problem. Currently, inflation is near a 13-year high. It has outstripped wage growth for many Americans, including the lowest earning workers. In other words, the rise in the price of everything from goods to groceries has resulted in a de facto pay cut for American workers.

So why are we experiencing this level of inflation? Well, as I mentioned, one reason is Democrats' decision in March to flood the economy with unnecessary government spending. President Biden and congressional Democrats took office mere weeks after Congress had approved a fifth—fifth—bipartisan COVID relief bill. And it was abundantly clear that we were not in immediate need of trillions more in government spending. But that didn't matter. It didn't matter to Democrats.

Now that they were in control of Congress and the White House, they wanted to take advantage of the COVID crisis. So in the name of COVID relief, they pushed through a massive partisan piece of legislation, filled with unnecessary spending and handouts to Democrat interests groups. Schools, which had barely touched the tens of billions they had already been given, got billions more. State governments, the majority of which did not need more government assistance, got access to a staggering—staggering—\$350 billion slush fund. Labor unions were made eligible for loans that were designed to rescue Main Street small businesses. And I could go on.

At the time, Republicans warned about the bill's level of spending. And we weren't alone. More than one liberal economist warned that pouring that much money into the economy at that time could result in inflation. And 6 months later, here we are. Inflation is near a 13-year high, and Americans are, rightly, worrying about whether their paychecks will stretch to cover the higher prices that they are facing.

In the face of that fact, and considering the substantial amounts of money we had to borrow to meet the COVID crisis, you might think that Democrats would be taking a moment to reflect and perhaps think about ways to rein in excessive spending. But you would be wrong. In fact, Democrats have decided to double down on their failed strategy and pass another massive government spending bill, even bigger—even bigger—than the last one that I just mentioned. That is right. Now Democrats are putting together a \$3.5 trillion spending bill to follow up on their \$1.9 trillion spending bill from this last March.

And to put those numbers in perspective, the entire Federal budget for 2019 was less than \$4.5 trillion. Dumping that much money into the economy is pretty much guaranteed to continue to fuel the kind of inflation that Americans are currently experiencing. In fact, there is a good chance it could make things much worse.

And that is not the only way Americans are likely to suffer as a result of Democrats' proposed tax-and-spending spree. Americans are going to also feel the pain of the \$2 trillion in tax hikes the Democrats are contemplating.

It always fascinates me how Democrats think that you can just pass tax increases without consequences. To hear Democrats talk, you would think that you can impose \$2 trillion in tax hikes and everything will just keep going along unchanged. But, of course, we all know that is not the way it works. There is no such thing as consequence-free taxation.

Raise taxes by any meaningful amount, and people are most likely going to change their behavior. A small business, for example, may think twice about hiring an additional worker if it is facing a tax hike. A larger business may decide not to open that new plant it has been planning or it may institute a hiring freeze or it may decide that it needs to encourage some early retirements.

Democrats' \$2 trillion tax hike would be the largest tax hike in decades. Democrats are proposing to raise taxes on large businesses, on small businesses, on investment, and on retirement savings. And the list goes on. And every one of those taxes will have consequences for ordinary Americans.

Democrats are proposing a corporate tax rate higher than the one imposed by communist China. That is going to put American businesses at a disadvantage on the global stage. And when American businesses suffer, American workers suffer.

Democrats always seem to forget that most Americans are employed by businesses, and that, as a result, when you raise taxes on businesses, ordinary Americans tend to feel the consequences.

If Democrats succeed in passing their \$2 trillion tax hike, it is going to have serious economic consequences for regular Americans—consequences like

fewer jobs and opportunities; slower or nonexistent wage growth, especially with higher inflation eroding household spending power; and fewer benefits.

Americans can also expect to see higher utility bills, thanks to Democrats' proposed tax hikes on large businesses and on energy development.

I have been talking for a while now, and I haven't even gotten to the spending side of the Democrats' tax-and-spending spree. Frankly, it is difficult to know even where to start. This proposal reads more like a spending encyclopedia. There is spending on pretty much every topic from A to Z.

There are the big-ticket items, of course, the supposedly free stuff that Democrats are emphasizing, such as free community college and free pre-K. Then, there are the items Democrats aren't advertising as much, like the \$200 million—yes, \$200 million—for a park in House Speaker PELOSI's district that features a luxury accommodation and a golf course. Given that, I am not sure why this park needs \$200 million from the Federal Government, but I guess being Speaker "hath its privileges."

In fact, one Democrat Representative admitted as much, noting that it seems that, and I quote, "Speaker PELOSI gets maybe a little bit more . . . on some of these bills," but then went on to argue that she deserves it for being Speaker.

But moving on, there is a nearly \$80 billion increase in funding for the IRS—yeah, \$80 billion. That is enough to nearly double the Agency's size. But I guess you have to have a lot of new agents to collect all of those new tax hikes.

Then there are new and expanded subsidies for electric vehicles. Under the Democrats' proposal, a couple could be making well over half a million dollars yet still claim more than \$12,000 from the Federal Government to purchase an electric car.

There is a Civilian Climate Corps—several of them, in fact—at various government Agencies, \$20 billion for a National Climate Bank to subsidize Democrats' pet environmental projects, and—I am not making this up—a new tax break to subsidize membership dues to unions—plus much, much more.

And, of course, with all that government spending comes new government regulations—a long, long, long list of them.

The consequences of the Democrats' tax-and-spending spree could be devastating—for our economy and for American families. And, unfortunately, Democrats have the ability to force this legislation through on a solely partisan basis.

I know there are at least some Members of the Democrat Party here in Congress who are uncomfortable with the stratospheric levels of spending the Democrats are proposing, and I hope that their cooler heads will prevail.

Meanwhile, I and every Republican will do everything we can to protect

Americans from Democrats' reckless tax-and-spending legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET IRENE STRICKLAND

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I am quite pleased that the Senate will soon be voting on the confirmation of Margaret Strickland, President Biden's nominee to be a district court judge for the District of New Mexico.

Ms. Strickland was born and raised in the southwest border region where this district court seat presides. She attended New Mexico State University and the University of Texas at El Paso, before attending law school at New York University.

Ms. Strickland returned to the Southwest after law school and started her career with the Las Cruces Office of the New Mexico Public Defender, representing clients in the juvenile drug court and in felony defense work.

In 2011, Ms. Strickland formed her own law firm, continuing her public service work representing indigent defendants in Federal court. Ms. Strickland has litigated both criminal and civil cases, including a significant number in the Federal district court located in Las Cruces, NM. She has also appeared before the New Mexico Court of Appeals, the New Mexico Supreme Court, and the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, and filed before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ms. Strickland served on the board of the New Mexico Criminal Defense Lawyers for over a decade, including as its president. In 2018, the Federal District of New Mexico appointed her to represent all Criminal Justice Act lawyers as a panel representative.

Ms. Strickland has also done significant volunteer work with programs that reduce the rate of euthanasia for companion animals. She and her husband Greg foster dogs and puppies set for euthanasia so the dogs can be placed in a home.

If confirmed, Ms. Strickland will be faced with one of the biggest Federal dockets in the country and inheriting a very heavy backlog of cases.

I am, however, confident that her experience and her incredible work ethic will best position her to immediately get to work.

Ms. Strickland is a highly qualified nominee with the right experience, the right temperament, and the right disposition to be a fairminded district court judge. The ABA agrees, giving her a majority "well qualified" rating.

She has spent her entire professional career working in the community in which she will sit. She knows intimately the impact that the legal system has on everyday Americans, and she understands that serving as a judge is very different from serving as an advocate.

She is ready and prepared to shift from zealously and effectively representing clients to faithfully applying the law to the facts of a specific case.

Both before and after her nomination was announced, New Mexicans called my office in favor of Ms. Strickland. I heard from judges, from prosecutors, from defense attorneys, and everyday New Mexicans. All of them called to say how much they believe in Ms. Strickland. Like those New Mexicans who called into my office, I believe Ms. Strickland belongs on the bench, and I am ready to cast my vote and help her get there.

I enthusiastically support Ms. Strickland's nomination for district court judge for the District of New Mexico, and I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in confirming this highly qualified nominee.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 231, Margaret Irene Strickland, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

Charles E. Schumer, Martin Heinrich, Alex Padilla, Margaret Wood Hassan, Raphael Warnock, Ben Ray Lujan, Gary C. Peters, Elizabeth Warren, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Duckworth, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Michael F. Bennet, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Cory A. Booker, Sherrod Brown.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Margaret Irene Strickland, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 367 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Hassan	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Ossoff
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Padilla
Booker	Hirono	Peters
Brown	Kaine	Reed
Cantwell	Kelly	Rosen
Cardin	King	Sanders
Carper	Klobuchar	Schatz
Casey	Leahy	Schumer
Collins	Lujan	Shaheen
Coons	Manchin	Sinema
Cortez Masto	Markey	Smith
Duckworth	Menendez	Stabenow
Durbin	Merkley	Tester
Gillibrand	Murkowski	
Graham	Murphy	

Van Hollen
Warner

Warnock
Warren

Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Lummis	Toomey
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Portman	

NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein Rounds

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:36 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SINEMA).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

HONORING STAFF SERGEANT RYAN KNAUSS

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I have come to the floor of the Senate today on behalf of myself and the senior Senator from Tennessee, MARSHA BLACKBURN, to honor the life and legacy of a heroic Tennessean, U.S. Army SSG Ryan Knauss, who was killed in a terrorist attack while serving the country that he loves so in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021.

Staff Sergeant Knauss served with the Army's 9th Psychological Operations Battalion, 8th Psychological Operations Group at Fort Bragg. He was from Corryton, TN—a small, rural community where love of country and volunteerism runs deep.

Corryton is known for being the hometown of country music star Kenny Chesney, and now it will be known forever as the home of our hero, SSG Ryan Knauss.

Ryan was 23 years old when he laid his life down for his Nation. I have spoken with Staff Sergeant Knauss's widow Alena and his father Greg. Through our conversations, I got to know a little bit more about Staff Sergeant Knauss. And I am here today to share with you all and with the American people just who Staff Sergeant Knauss was.

He was a devoted husband. Ryan met Alena when they were in high school working at a local pizza parlor. I sensed her deep love for Ryan when we spoke, and I am certain that Alena feels blessed to have had the opportunity to be loved by someone like Ryan.

He was a loyal son. After speaking with Ryan's father Greg, it was clear the love and the commitment that SSG Ryan Knauss had for his family and his fellow soldiers was unwavering.

I can only tell you that after hearing of Ryan's dedication to his family and his country, it is the hope and prayer of every parent to have a son as honorable and principled as Ryan. As a father, I told Greg I couldn't fathom his grief.

Ryan had hoped to soon become a father himself. He and Alena had plans to try for their first child when he came back from overseas. And building a nursery was at the top of their to-do list when he was to arrive home.

Staff Sergeant Knauss was a steadfast friend. His own friend spoke of his charm and intelligence at a memorial service at his former high school in Corryton. He was a charismatic person to whom people were instantly drawn.

SSG Ryan Knauss was a proud and honorable soldier. And when his country needed him at such a dire time, he fiercely answered the call.

Even as a child, Ryan knew his calling was to serve. In a friend's elementary school yearbook, Ryan wrote that he wanted to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. And as a freshman in high school, he signed up for the ROTC program. As one of his fellow soldiers explained, "This was his dream job, and he . . . ran with it."

Ryan's unit, Detachment 10, described it as follows:

Ryan knew the dangerous situation he was going to, but protecting innocent civilians is one of the values that drove him. It has been said that life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives, and Ryan had an incredible impact on his family and friends. And thanks to his actions, thousands of children will have the joy of knowing a childhood free from danger and oppression.

The Bible teaches us that no one has "greater love than this, than to lay down one's life for one's friends." Staff Sergeant Knauss did just that. He died a hero's death. He made the ultimate sacrifice for his Nation, for all of us.

Ryan will be remembered as a selfless and heroic man—a Tennessee volunteer—who, with a servant's heart, gave everything of himself at just 23 years old for the country that he loved so dearly.

I ask that each of you here today join me in continuing to pray for the Knauss family and uplift them in the coming days and months as they lay their soldier to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

AFGHANISTAN

Madam President, from the moment that President Biden announced the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan in April, the people of the United States—after two decades of war—had hoped to mark the end of our presence in Afghanistan with a secure and orderly exit and with our honor intact.

As we know, what ensued proved to be the opposite. Hubris fueled the administration to proceed with a flawed

exit plan from Afghanistan. They allowed a calendar to dictate our withdrawal rather than the conditions on the ground. Loss of life and humiliation have been the result, with our allies and our partners openly questioning the resolve and the competency of the United States.

Those harrowing images of Afghan teenagers falling from the sky after clinging to a U.S. military plane as it took off from the Kabul airport, the utter chaos at the gates of the Kabul airport, and the loss of 13 U.S. service-members, including Staff Sergeant Knauss, would compel any reasonable person to ask why events had to unfold in this manner.

Against the operational failure in Afghanistan and this loss of credibility abroad, we are fortunate in knowing that the people of the United States still retain their unique spirit—that American desire to come to the aid of others in need.

Those Americans stranded in Afghanistan, the former Afghan interpreters who stood with our military, Afghan women and children who worked with our aid organizations—these people needed our help, and our servicemembers, our diplomats, our aid workers, and journalists all deserve recognition and credit for their sacrifice as they attempted to help.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF

Madam President, I want to take this opportunity to highlight another group of Americans who rarely receive the public recognition they deserve, the staff right here in the U.S. Senate. These staffers shun the spotlight and dedicate their craft to represent the interests of our constituents.

When it became clear that the administration was failing in Afghanistan, congressional staffers from across Capitol Hill—from both parties in Washington and in State offices and district offices around the country—rose to the challenge. These staffers helped with a modern-day "Digital Dunkirk." They were united in the common cause of helping stranded Americans and Afghan allies. Many of them sprung to action instinctively and in an instant, almost as if they had been on call, like a doctor or a firefighter, immediately ready to help mitigate the damage of this disaster.

Some of those who did this work serve on my staff: Bobby Zarate, my national security advisor, spent countless hours engaging with counterparts in the State Department, communicating with Active-Duty military and veterans, including some on the ground in Afghanistan, and, of course, fielding requests from all corners to expedite cases of American citizens and allies in Afghanistan; Kevin Kim, a fellow in my office from the State Department; Rachel Leong, a legislative correspondent; and Bonny Warren, a case-worker in my Cookeville office. They were all right there, too, every step of the way.

For their work on behalf of folks in need, I want to thank them for all that they do and all they continue to do.

I imagine many of my colleagues here in the Senate have similar stories, their own Bobbys, their own Kevins, and Rachels, and Bonnys helping those in need. And for the totality of their work, we, the Members of the Senate, owe our staff a great thanks.

I am honored to describe the role that my office played and is continuing to play in rescuing Americans from Afghanistan, but it didn't have to be this way. And I hope, for the sake of our government and our country, that it will never be this way again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator MURPHY and I be allowed to complete our exchange before the next scheduled vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2770

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, after Joe Biden's disastrous retreat from Afghanistan, the country has fallen to a medieval band of degenerate savages known as the Taliban.

Despite its depraved behavior, you won't hear anyone in our government call the Taliban what it is: a terrorist organization. Instead, Secretary of State Blinken has said, for example, that the Taliban "does not meet the test of inclusivity." It is as if the Biden administration is more concerned that the Taliban is led by men than that it is led by terrorists.

This administration has refused to declare that the Taliban is a foreign terrorist organization, perhaps because the President outsourced the security of American citizens to the Taliban last month and stood by as it took over a country of nearly 40 million people.

Once again, the Biden administration is putting image, public relations, before everything else. It refuses to acknowledge that the Afghan retreat was anything but an "extraordinary success," as Joe Biden has called it. And now it is refusing to call terrorists "terrorists."

But the truth is obvious. If the Taliban isn't a foreign terrorist organization, what is? The State Department's terrorism list includes groups like Shining Path, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist guerillas in Peru, and Aum Shinrikyo, the Japanese doomsday cult.

If the State Department can go to the trouble of designating those groups as terrorist organizations, surely they can do the same for a band of jihadists whose hands are dripping with American blood.

Indeed, the Taliban matches to a tee the definition for foreign terrorist organization under U.S. law. That law sets out three criteria: First, it must be a foreign organization. I would assume the Biden administration would

concede even that point about the Taliban. Second, it must engage in terrorist activity. Has the Taliban engaged in terrorist activity? Countless victims of Taliban suicide bombings, targeted assassinations, IEDs, and acid attacks would surely answer yes to that question, if they survived those heinous crimes.

Consider the following as well: At least 14 of the Taliban's 33 so-called cabinet ministers are on the United Nations' sanctions list for terrorism. No fewer than five were once held with terrorists at Guantanamo Bay.

One of the most powerful factions of the Taliban is the murderous Haqqani Network—a twisted clan that the United States has already designated a terrorist organization under the Obama administration.

The Taliban has put the leader of the Haqqani Network in charge of the country's secret police and, yes, its immigration system, which is currently determining which persons can leave the country.

Sirajuddin Haqqani is one of America's most-wanted terrorists for attacking the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and hotels full of civilians, among other crimes.

It is also worth noting that the son of the Taliban's leader and so-called emir blew himself up in a suicide attack against the Afghan Government in 2017. Evidently, he thought the Taliban was a terrorist organization, even if some around Washington shrink from that label.

Finally, the third criterion for a foreign terrorist organization is that its terrorism must threaten the security of Americans or our national security.

With an estimated 100 Americans and thousands of green card holders currently trapped in Taliban-occupied Afghanistan, I would say the answer to that question is also obvious. It would still be obvious even if we didn't face an active hostage situation since the Taliban still provides safe haven to al-Qaida, who murdered thousands of Americans on September 11, 2001.

Despite the Taliban's empty promises that it would never again help al-Qaida, a recent United Nations report found that "the Taliban and al-Qaida remain closely aligned and show no indication of breaking ties." Al-Qaida continues to pledge allegiance to the Taliban, and its regional affiliate even operates under the Taliban banner in Kandahar. Now, that is a national security threat to America, if there ever was one.

So, to summarize, the Taliban is run by terrorists, it associates with terrorists, and it engages in terrorism. The Biden administration's refusal to call a spade a spade is a grave insult to the memory of the Taliban's victims and the tens of thousands of Americans who fought against it. It is worth remembering how many American lives the Taliban took, how many American warriors they maimed, and how many families they have shattered. That is terrorism.

So I will be asking unanimous consent for my bill, which would require Secretary Blinken to call the Taliban what they are—not a potential partner for Joe Biden, not a threat to inclusivity, but a terrorist organization.

Therefore, Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2770, which is at the desk; I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, how quickly my colleagues forget that it was President Trump who entered into negotiations with the Taliban. It was President Trump who entered into an agreement with the Taliban that committed the United States to withdraw our forces. It was President Trump who sold out women and girls in that country by refusing to put their interests first at that negotiating table. It was President Trump who elevated the Taliban in the international community by putting them face-to-face with our negotiators.

It is important to note, as to the specific request that is being made by the Senator from Arkansas, that right now, the Taliban is already designated as a designated global terrorist entity under Executive Order 13224. So they are already designated as a terrorist entity.

There are specific problems with this designation. First, I don't think it is a great idea for us to be designating FTOs by statute. There is a reason why we generally allow the administration to do this. But maybe more importantly, what comes with an FTO is the withdrawal of humanitarian organizations from the country at hand. We know that because we saw it in Yemen. When President Trump designated the Houthis as an FTO for about a week, humanitarian organizations started pulling up their stakes. Right now, there are 18 million Afghans who are in need of lifesaving humanitarian assistance. This is not the moment to take a step that will cause Afghans to starve.

The second reason not to do this this way is because, whether we like it or not, we are in communication through intermediaries with the Taliban to get our people out, to get our partners out. There are flights leaving on a regular basis. And to designate them as an FTO, in addition to the existing designation that the Taliban has as a specially designated global terrorist entity, is to risk our ability to continue to bring our people out.

We should be joined together as a Senate, despite the views we have on whether we should have stayed or left

Afghanistan, in our support for the Afghan people by making sure that we do not take steps to cut off humanitarian assistance to people in need and our belief that we should be supporting this administration in their effort to continue to get our partners out.

This designation done this way will risk both of those initiatives, and for that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I share my colleague's grave concerns about the humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan. I share his concerns about the fate of Americans and green card holders and their families and Afghans who fought alongside our troops who were also left behind in Afghanistan. Both of these crises—the humanitarian crisis and the crisis of Americans left behind Taliban enemy lines—are the responsibility of Joe Biden for his hapless, disorganized, chaotic execution of the withdrawal from that country.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON STRICKLAND NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Strickland nomination?

Mr. HEINRICH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California Mrs. (FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 368 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Graham	Ossoff	Wyden
Hassan	Padilla	
Heinrich	Peters	

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Crapo	Inhofe
Blackburn	Cruz	Johnson
Blunt	Daines	Kennedy
Boozman	Ernst	Lankford
Braun	Fischer	Lee
Capito	Grassley	Lummis
Cassidy	Hagerty	Marshall
Cornyn	Hawley	McConnell
Cotton	Hooven	Moran
Cramer	Hyde-Smith	Paul

Portman	Scott (FL)	Tillis
Risch	Scott (SC)	Toomey
Romney	Shelby	Tuberville
Rubio	Sullivan	Wicker
Sasse	Thune	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Burr	Feinstein	Rounds
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Wyoming.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor to talk about the growing list of disasters that is occurring in this country and around the world as a result of the actions of President Biden.

The most recent disaster is President Biden's surrender of Afghanistan to global terrorists. For two decades, Americans fought and died in Afghanistan, and they did it to keep our country safe and free. On Thursday, August 26, the United States lost 13 servicemembers in Kabul, Afghanistan. It was the deadliest single day for our military in more than a decade. One of those fallen heroes, 20-year-old Rylee McCollum, was from Wyoming.

Despite heroic sacrifice by our servicemembers, the Taliban, today, is stronger than ever. The Taliban controls more territory than it did on September 11 of 2001, 20 years ago. Afghanistan is, once again, a safe harbor for terrorists.

This disaster happened because President Biden paid more attention to the calendar on the wall than he did to the conditions on the ground. President Biden wanted symbolism. Well, we got symbolism. We got the symbol of terrorists. It is the one they wanted. It is the symbol of helicopters flying, leaving the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan—something that President Biden promised the American people they would never see, but there it was for the world to see.

The entire world also witnessed desperate Afghan citizens. They were plummeting to their deaths as they tried to hang onto planes that were leaving from the airport. President Biden was so eager to pull our troops out of Afghanistan by an arbitrary date that he left hundreds, if not thousands, of American citizens trapped—hostages behind enemy lines. President Biden abandoned the strategically located Bagram Air Base. It is the one base that could have evacuated people safely.

The Biden administration even gave the Taliban a list of American citizens. I mean, can you imagine that? The administration gave the Taliban—the terrorists—a list of American citizens, green card holders, Afghan allies, people we wanted to get out of the country. To me and many Americans who heard that this happened, we saw it as a kill list—a list that the terrorists

would use against American citizens and our allies on the ground—and we may never know how many are captured or tortured and are killed.

We could have left Afghanistan with our honor intact. Instead, our enemies are now emboldened, and our friends are furious—furious at us. Billions and billions of dollars' worth of American military equipment and military secrets are now in the hands of the Taliban. Joe Biden has armed the Taliban beyond its wildest dreams. The Taliban has seized more than 600,000 American weapons. This includes over 2,000 armored vehicles, like Humvees, MRAPs, and even American tanks. They also have at least 40 aircraft, including Black Hawk helicopters and drones. The Biden administration has no plan either to get these weapons back or to destroy them where they sit on the ground.

President Biden has surrendered America to the terrorists, and now I believe they are coming for us.

Yet Afghanistan is just one of President Biden's many failures. On issue after issue, this President has displayed complete incompetence.

For instance, President Biden has displayed gross incompetence and mismanagement at our southern border. On President Biden's first day in office—on the very first day—he flipped on a green light at the border, and he laid out the welcome mat. He shut down the construction of the border wall even though it had been fully paid for. He illegally ended the very successful "Remain in Mexico" policy, and he stopped all deportations. Ever since then—ever since that day 1 of his administration—illegal immigration has been at an alltime high.

Over the last week, we have seen more than 10,000 illegal immigrants crowding under a single bridge in Del Rio, TX. Since President Biden became President, more than a million illegal immigrants have crossed into our country. That is more than twice the population of Wyoming. Some of these illegal immigrants carry deadly disease; others carry illegal weapons. Since Joe Biden became President, our border agents have seized enough fentanyl—it is a deadly drug—to kill every American man, woman, and child.

The Joe Biden border crisis is—and the word is important to hear here—"unprecedented." That is not my word. It is a direct quote from the Secretary of Homeland Security. Joe Biden's Secretary of Homeland Security, a few weeks ago, was caught on tape. He told our Border Patrol officers that the border situation "cannot continue."

He went on to say:

If our border is our first line of defense, then we are going to lose. . . . This is unsustainable.

Again, this is coming from President Biden's Secretary of Homeland Security.

Yet Democrats in Washington want to double down on this open border pol-

icy. Senate Democrats have tried to give amnesty to over 8 million illegal immigrants. Now, they have failed, but if they had been successful, it would have been the largest amnesty for illegal immigrants in our Nation's history. Well, that sends a very loud message to people all around the world. It says, if you come here illegally, the Democrats are sure going to try to give you government benefits and maybe even citizenship. This message from this White House and the Democrats only strengthens the magnet for people to come here illegally.

Under President Biden, we have chosen chaos on the border, and we have chaos also in Democratic-governed cities. Over the past year and a half, we have seen an unprecedented rise in murders, in shootings, and in violent crime in Democratic-run cities. Last year, the murder rate went up by a third. This year, it is up again. Nearly all of the increases are in cities run by Democrats.

Last year, in Democratic cities, what did they do? Well, they cut more than \$1 billion off the funding for our police, for law enforcement—for the people who are there to keep the cities and the streets safe. As a result, crime is out of control, and working families are scared.

There is also something else that is worrying families all across America, and those are the skyrocketing costs they have to pay every time they fill up their tanks or when they go to the grocery stores. At a time when our economy should be booming, the purchasing power of people's paychecks is getting eaten away. Gasoline is now nearly a dollar more a gallon than it was when Joe Biden took office. Now it costs about \$25 more to fill up your vehicle. It costs about \$25 more for a weekly trip of shopping at the grocery store. So \$25 for gas and \$25 for groceries is \$50 a week. That is over \$2,000 a year in lost buying ability—lost power of the paycheck—for American families.

Inflation is happening because of excessive Democratic borrowing and spending. Gas prices are also rising because President Biden is restricting American energy. He has killed thousands of good energy jobs. He took an ax to the Keystone XL Pipeline. He stopped all new oil and gas leases on Federal land. It is no surprise to Americans that the price of energy is going up.

And what is President Biden's solution to this? Well, he wants to raise taxes on energy produced in America. He doesn't want Americans to explore for energy and oil in the United States. No. His National Security Advisor, last month, actually asked foreign oil-producing countries, including Saudi Arabia and Russia—this is the National Security Advisor—to pump more foreign oil to lower the price of gas. And you say: How do you know that? Well, it was on the White House's website, right there for the world to see. The

President would prefer for us to buy energy from our enemies rather than produce it here at home.

Under the last President and the previous administration, the United States became energy dominant. President Biden seems very determined to make us energy dependent once again.

I could go on. There are so many failures of the Biden administration to discuss. Every single one of these crises could have been avoided. Each one was predictable and could have been prevented with competent leadership in the White House. They could have been avoided if Democrats had stopped their mad dash to the left.

The American people gave us a 50-50 Senate. They didn't ask for a leftwing agenda. No wonder recent polls show Americans, overwhelmingly, say the country is headed in the wrong direction. The American people know what they want: safe communities, secure borders, higher wages, lower prices. It is what I hear in Wyoming, and it is what I heard this past weekend. The incompetence of this administration over the last 8 months cannot be allowed to continue. The American people deserve better.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, pursuant to S. Res. 27, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs being tied on the question of reporting, I move to discharge the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs from further consideration of the nomination of Rohit Chopra, of the District of Columbia, to be Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection for a term of five years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of S. Res. 27, there will now be up to 4 hours of debate on the motion, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with no motions, points of order, or amendments in order.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, for the information of all Senators, we expect the vote on the motion to discharge to occur around 5:40 p.m.

I yield the floor to my friend from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

SUPPLEMENTAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I rise, as I have before, to explain the urgent need to pass a supplemental disaster assistance bill. But this time it is

not just for Hurricane Laura, which hit southwest Louisiana over a year ago; it now includes Hurricane Ida, the fifth-most powerful storm to hit the United States, which hit Southeast Louisiana last month.

And here, for example, is some of the flooding that was related to Hurricane Ida. I should point out, by the way, that this is not considered a flood event. Well, if it is not considered a flood event, that looks like pretty bad flooding. This is considered a wind event; and so even when it is not considered a flood event, you see almost this entire community flooded.

So I guess my statement, Madam President, is: We can't afford—we should not allow the impact of an entire year's—now almost 2 years'—worth of natural disasters go unaddressed for fellow Americans.

I mentioned it is over a year since Hurricane Laura wreaked havoc on Lake Charles. We are only a couple weeks shy of the 1-year anniversary of Hurricane Delta, a category 2 storm that followed on almost the exact same track to hit Southwest Louisiana. Those who were trying to recover were once again subjected to tremendous rains with flooding, and then Hurricane Ida.

But before I go to Ida, let me also point out there were also unprecedented winter storms which unleashed catastrophic damage to livestock, crops, and buildings for Louisiana farmers. The same storms that got more publicity in Texas hit us as well, and then Ida and Tropical Storm Nicholas.

In light of these storms, I must speak about the National Flood Insurance Program, or NFIP, which is set to roll out Risk Rating 2.0 on October 1, while many policyholders are still recovering from hurricane damage.

FEMA said Risk Rating 2.0—FEMA said policyholders were supposed to be able to get the information of what their new premiums would be by August 1. FEMA missed that deadline. They only recently made the information available, less than 1 month of advanced notice.

But despite the lack of transparency, we know Risk Rating 2.0 will increase costs. In Louisiana, 80 percent of policyholders will see increases in the first year. For some, premiums may become unaffordable and could collapse the value of their home.

Now, these aren't rich people. The criticism of the program is that some rich person with a home on the beach gets subsidized flood insurance. That is not true.

These are middle-income families and working families, whom the President, by the way, pledged not to increase the cost on those earning less than 400,000 a year. These folks don't make \$400,000 a year; they make far less. They have a hard time paying their gasoline bill or their food bill, with the inflation we have had recently, and now they are about to be socked with Risk Rating 2.0.

By the way, Congress never passed a bill requiring that FEMA implement this. President Biden can stop it. He alone is responsible. He should ask FEMA to delay implementation of Risk Rating 2.0 or reconsider altogether. At the end of the day, flood insurance must be affordable for the homeowner, accessible for the homeowner, accountable to the taxpayer, and sustainable.

I proposed with Senator MENENDEZ—and before Senator MENENDEZ, Senator GILLIBRAND—reforms to accomplish that. We can achieve that, but Risk Rating 2.0 is not the way to do so. It is time for Congress to conduct thorough oversight.

And, of course, I represent the people of Louisiana, but I could speak of any place in the Nation which has flooded. Speaking for the people of Louisiana, but for all those fellow Americans who flooded, when you flood, you have been pounded; and my job is to help my fellow Americans, no matter where she or he lives, to get back on their feet.

And right now I speak to the people of Louisiana: It is my commitment to you to attempt to do so.

And we are strong. We are resilient. I drove through south Louisiana. There were people cleaning up their house by taking water-logged beds out, but they gave a thumbs-up when you went by. They are resilient. We are resilient people.

On the other hand, when you see on a map of power outage and we are 4 weeks out and there are still people who don't have power back, and this is the United States of America? They don't have homes—they don't have electricity to their home. They can't run their refrigerator. Their home is probably destroyed. It is a tough situation.

So I ask my colleagues to pass a clean, separate disaster assistance bill. The formal request from the White House includes 2.3 billion for the Community Development Block Disaster Recovery Program; 275 million for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program, 9 billion for the Wildlife and Hurricane Indemnity Program, 100 million for reclamation projects to address western drought, and 2.6 billion for the Federal Highway Emergency Relief.

This request includes initial, though informal, estimates of what may also be needed from damage inflicted by Hurricane Ida. Specifically, they expect the cost and needs stemming from Ida to likely exceed an additional \$10 billion in the form of CDBG Disaster Relief, Federal Highway Emergency Relief, Federal Transit Emergency Relief, Small Business Administration disaster loans, and the Disaster Relief Fund, among other programs.

And, of course, this is not just to benefit our fellow Americans in Louisiana but also those in the Northeast. More people died in the Northeast related to Hurricane Ida than died in Louisiana. So this is not just for my State; it is

for our country—different regions, different neighborhoods, but all fellow Americans.

So I ask that we pass this bill for the people of Lake Charles, pass this bill for the people of Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes in Southeast Louisiana, pass the bill for the people impacted by Ida in the Northeast, and pass the bill for the people impacted by wildfires in the West.

It is really simple. Let's not let politics hold up a supplemental disaster relief bill. Or put differently, let's don't leverage the pain of our fellow Americans in a political game. Pass the disaster relief bill.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAXES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I am here today with a number of my colleagues from the Finance Committee to discuss in the next hour the partisan \$3.5 trillion reckless tax-and-spend bill that the Democrats are trying to cram down on the American people.

The United States is experiencing unprecedented economic pressures, including significant inflation and record price increases, significant friction in labor markets, and intense international competition, all while the pandemic continues to threaten Americans' health and our economic recovery. Yet the Democrats want to move forward with this reckless \$3.5 trillion tax-and-spending spree that will stunt our economic recovery, further impede labor markets, and punish low- and middle-income workers with higher prices for everyday goods and services.

The Democrats are currently debating just how high they want to increase taxes on American businesses and workers. House Democrats have proposed to hike the corporate tax rate to 26.5 percent from 21 percent. This would return our combined corporate tax rate, at 31 percent, to one of the highest among developed countries.

Hiking the rate indisputably hits the middle class. Estimates suggest that workers shoulder up to 70 percent of the burden of the corporate tax. A recent analysis performed by the non-partisan Joint Committee on Taxation says the burden on over 98 percent of Americans who make less than \$500,000 a year increases over time.

Let me make that clear. Ninety-eight percent of the increase that is felt by labor falls on those making less than \$500,000 per year and the vast majority of that on those making less than \$400,000 per year.

Our Democratic colleagues argue that these increases do not violate

President Biden's pledge since they are not specific higher individual tax rates. But hard-working Americans do not care about the distinction between a direct or indirect tax; they care about how taxes hit their pocketbooks. A higher corporate tax rate would result in lower wages and reduced benefits, hit the nest eggs of everyone saving for retirement, and force consumers to pay more for everyday necessities.

This plan would also impose hundreds of billions of dollars in tax hikes on U.S. businesses operating across the globe, overwhelmingly rewarding our foreign competitors and making the United States again one of the highest taxing countries in the developed world. These pro-China tax hikes would raise the relative cost of doing business in America and punish businesses selling products or services overseas, re-igniting inversions and foreign acquisitions, again putting America's business climate back into trouble.

Democrats also want to increase the top individual tax rate to 39.6 percent from 37 percent—a rate that kicks in at \$400,000 for individuals and \$450,000 for married couples. This includes a supercharged marriage penalty, as unmarried couples can earn almost a million dollars a year without being subject to increased taxes.

Democrats have also proposed increasing the number of Americans subject to the original death tax, including farmers and small business owners. Others are pushing for a double death tax by eliminating the step-up in the basis entirely. Rather than be given time to grieve their loss, families could be forced to sell farms, businesses, and homes just to pay Uncle Sam.

Less noticed are some of the plans to drastically expand the powers of the Internal Revenue Service and turn banks and credit unions into private investigators for monitoring law-abiding Americans. This financial dragnet will force financial institutions into reporting deposit and withdrawal flows on as little as \$600 in their customers' accounts, exposing sensitive data to future breaches. Whether the cutoff for monitoring transactions is \$600 or \$10,000, Americans of all income levels would have their private financial activities reported to the leaky IRS. The threats to privacy and invasion of compliant taxpayers' personal financial affairs are staggering.

Moving on, the Democrats are also proposing sweeping government price controls on the very innovators in our healthcare system who helped to battle the pandemic by developing lifesaving vaccines and therapeutics. Under the guise of negotiation, government bureaucrats would have the power to set prices for medications, devaluing the lives of the most vulnerable among us, including older Americans and those with disabilities. Their proposals could prevent scores of game-changing prescription drugs from coming to the market in the years to come—with one recent study projecting as many as 342

fewer new medication approvals in the next two decades—in addition to driving up the launch prices for new products.

This even went too far for some of the House Democrats, with three Members at least voting against this legislation in committee.

As I have indicated, this reckless tax-and-spend plan comes just over a year after we were experiencing one of the most prosperous economies in decades. Before the pandemic, a combination of reduced regulatory burden and pro-growth tax policies helped to create one of the strongest economies in our lifetime. All in the period of a short few years, we have seen that evaporate.

We should be focused on policies that will get us past this pandemic and back to the strong and inclusive economic growth we were experiencing rather than taking advantage of a prolonged pandemic to reimagine America as a welfare state.

This is the wrong time to raise taxes.

Excuse me just a moment, Mr. President. Excuse me. I didn't notice that I have been joined by the Senator from Nebraska.

I will now yield more of my time to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I know that Senator GRASSLEY is going to join us momentarily, so I will cut in line until he arrives. But I would like to thank Senator CRAPO for his leadership in organizing this.

It is a little odd to be doing this on the Senate floor when we should be having markups and hearings in the Senate Finance Committee, but the Senate Finance Committee has not been considering any of this proposed legislation despite the fact that we are dealing with New Deal-size and -level legislation. Yet the Finance Committee is not considering it, so I thank Ranking Member CRAPO for bringing us to the floor.

I want to talk about some of these taxing and spending issues, but I want to make it clear that I am not here to talk about this because I am obsessed about the marginal tax rates for the top 1 percent of Americans. I am not. It is not why I ran for office. But I am here today to talk about this because, as a China hawk, I am obsessed with the fact that the American people, the American Government, American technology companies and lots of companies that aren't today thought of as technology companies but will increasingly be technology companies operating in different verticals—I am obsessed with the fact that our firms and our people are going to need to be able to compete with the Chinese Communist Party.

The future of everything, from technology to trade, to global security and defense issues, is going to go one of two ways: It is either going to be led by the Chinese Communist Party or it is going to be led by the United States

and our allies and Western values. The future of not just global economics but global security policy over the next 3 and 5 and 7 and 10 years is going to be radically shaped by which direction we go.

Failure is not an option. This next century is going to be defined either by oppression, censorship, and brutality—the sorts of things that we are seeing in Xinjiang right now as the Uighurs are brutally oppressed by the Chinese Communist Party—or we are going to see a world that is led by Western values and beliefs in trade and human rights and open navigation of the seaways and transparent contracts and the rule of law.

That is the proper context in which we should be considering this taxing-and-spending debate, and it would be helpful for the American people if we would discuss President Biden's tax-and-spending spree in the context of that global technology and diplomatic competition with the CCP because these dangerous policies in this \$3.5 trillion or whatever pricetag it is going to end up at—this piece of omnibus legislation is going to hurt our ability to compete against Beijing.

Spending is out of control. The American people, last November, just 10 months ago, elected an evenly divided Senate. Yet somehow progressives believe they have a mandate to radically remake America. You actually hear a lot of them use language about radically transforming America, as if an American public that voted for a 50–50 Senate was voting for some sort of radical remaking of American policy as a newer-new, bigger-big New Deal.

They have spent trillions of dollars that we don't have already this year, and now they are looking to add another \$3.5 trillion to expand cradle-to-grave government propositions about how government should interfere and interact with the average American's life.

Well, what is government? What a government is supposed to be is a compact for the common defense. The first and most fundamental principle that government exists to do is make sure that everyone is free from violence and chaos and tyranny so that they can organize their lives and local communities. That is the first thing government is supposed to be. Yet we also believe that government has some social safety net responsibilities.

Stated in a summary fashion, you might say that the government is supposed to be the army and we also have some social safety net insurance programs attached to them. It seems like, when you listen to Senator SANDERS speak, he thinks of it exactly the opposite: The government is a giant insurance company that just happens to own a navy. And sometimes it sounds like he doesn't even really care if we own a navy; he just conceives of the government as a giant insurance program where everything is compulsory and government decides what programs

people need to have and what services they want. The vast majority of the American people don't want that and they didn't vote for that, and a 50–50 Senate shouldn't be trying to deliver that.

This year, the President and my Democratic colleagues have increased spending in every area—social, environmental, and economic policy-related. If there was an opportunity to spend over the course of the last 8½ months, they have taken it. A couple trillion here, a couple trillion there, and pretty soon, you are talking about real money.

Now it is time to pay the piper, and my colleagues are talking about raising taxes. But this isn't just any tax hike we are talking about. When you look at the corporate rates that we are looking at, we would be talking about the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. These are just the new taxes. Yet even that doesn't pay for all of the new spending. So we are talking about new legislation that would radically raise taxes to the highest corporate tax rates in the industrial Earth and yet still not pay for all of the new spending they are talking about. When deficits grow forever, opportunities shrink.

We have a Member of the House of Representatives who, in her supertelegenic way, figured out how to get attention last week by wearing a dress that said “Tax the Rich” on the back of it. What the dress should really read is “Tax the Young” because history tells us very clearly that when you deficit-spend at the level they are talking about doing here, this is a tax of current older and wealthier people against younger people. That is how inflation works. That is how debt and deficit work. The dress should have read “Tax the Young.”

These are tax hikes that make communist China a much better business environment than the United States. Under the President's plan, Americans would have a 32-percent combined rate, compared to a much smaller Chinese tax rate, at their baseline nominal level. But it is important to recognize that the Chinese tax code currently incentivizes high-tech businesses with an even lower 15-percent rate. So we are talking about north of a 30-percent rate against the Chinese Communist Party trying to make sure they attract investment by taxing their technology and digital companies at a 15-percent rate. This is the definition of shooting yourself in the foot.

My friends on the other side of the aisle are a lot of smart folks, and they know that tax rates actually matter for international investment and for competitiveness. One of the ways you know they know is because, for months, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has been out seeking a global minimum tax arrangement. She is admitting the obvious truth—that a new tax increase will saddle American firms with a burden that other companies across the globe don't have.

The CCP is not going to bail us out, as we would potentially raise taxes to the highest rates in the world, by also raising their tax rates to bail out President Biden's domestic agenda. Beijing looks at our endless debt, at our entitlement crisis, at our tax hikes, at our disunity, and they see a strategic advantage.

These China-friendly tax hikes would raise the cost of doing business in America. These China-friendly tax hikes would drive innovation overseas. These China-friendly tax hikes would lead to more corporate inversions. These China-friendly tax hikes will hurt American R&D.

If you want the 21st century to be defined by global Chinese Communist Party leadership, you would tax and spend just like this legislation seeks to do. Reckless spending doesn't steward a great nation. Super tax hikes do not promote innovation.

Competition with the Chinese Communist Party is the defining national security issue of our time, whether my colleagues in this body want to admit it on a regular basis or not. While the Chinese Communist Party plunders American intellectual property, steals American ingenuity, and pours investments into their state-run technologies, Washington is debating whether or not we should punish innovative firms and innovative Americans.

This isn't strong. This isn't smart. And the American people know better.

I yield the floor to Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in 2017, Republicans reformed the Tax Code in a traditional sense. We broadened the tax base by reducing tax preferences for special interests in favor of lower overall tax rates.

We also had several other goals, including maintaining the progressivity of the Tax Code, cutting taxes across all income groups—predominantly for the middle class—and making our business tax system globally competitive. We were able to accomplish each of these goals in that 2017 tax bill.

On average, taxpayers across all levels saw a tax cut. Middle-income taxpayers saw the largest percentage decrease in their tax bills. Also, we not only maintained the progressivity of our Tax Code, we made it more progressive.

Moreover, the bill brought our business tax system and rates in line with the rest of the world. You just heard Senator SASSE speak brilliantly about that point. It put an end to the practice of corporations moving headquarters offshore to avoid paying the highest tax rate in the developed world.

In the process, it incentivized American businesses to invest here at home and made America a more attractive place for foreign companies to locate.

Now, prepandemic, these reforms resulted in the highest economic growth,

the lowest unemployment, and the biggest wage gains that we had seen in decades. So when you talk about what the Democrats are proposing through reconciliation, it is kind of like they are ready to kill the goose that laid the golden egg.

Now we are post-COVID. Democrats assert a massive expansion of government is necessary to, in their words, build back better. But that is exactly backwards. America will build back better post-pandemic, but it won't be because of the government. In fact, it is already happening due to the perseverance of the American people and the ingenuity of the American entrepreneurs and job creators.

Unfortunately, the tax bill unveiled by Ways and Means last week will only hinder our path back to the prosperity that we had prior to February 2020. Their bill is the exact opposite of tax reform. It would raise marginal tax rates on individuals and small businesses to a level not seen since before the 1986 tax act.

Moreover, our corporate tax rate would once again be the highest among our major trading partners. These tax hikes will slow our recovery from the pandemic, and it will reduce capital investment; and it takes capital investment to create jobs. So it will result in fewer jobs, and it is also going to result in reduced wages beyond the reduced wages that is already happening because inflation is heating up. It will reinvigorate corporate inversions with major companies fleeing overseas.

In conjunction with raising tax rates, they narrow the tax rate base in favor of social and corporate welfare handouts. Now, I say handouts because the majority of their bill's \$1.2 trillion in tax cuts aren't reductions but turn out to be pure spending.

According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, \$689 billion—or 57 percent—of their so-called tax cuts are actually outlays. That is a fancy way of saying Treasury is going to write the individual or businesses a check that may exceed their taxes that they had otherwise paid.

This is turning our tax laws and the mission of the Internal Revenue Service on its head. No longer would the Tax Code primarily be raising revenue necessary to fund essential governments. In fact, it would be about doling out cash to those that Democrats consider worthy.

Given their rhetoric, you might think that these types of cash payments would be reserved for low- to moderate-income individuals and families. But, even very wealthy individuals buying electric cars, millionaires investing in green energy projects, and multibillion-dollar corporations will be in line for Federal checks.

This is astonishing coming from a party claiming to be outraged by wealthy individuals and profitable corporations paying zero tax. As recently as March of this year, President Biden castigated Amazon for not paying “a

single solitary penny in federal income tax[es].” If he finds that unacceptable, then he should be beside himself about this Democrat tax proposal.

Under their tax bills, a company such as Amazon would have an effective tax rate of not just zero, but negative. In other words, favored companies could receive a check from the government in excess of any income taxes owed. Meanwhile, disfavored groups would be left to pick up the tab. This includes Iowa family farmers, who could see their years of hard work taxed away as a result of the death tax exemption being slashed in half.

What I have outlined here is a small sample of concerns that I have with the House proposal. Their bill is so chock-full of tax giveaways, counterproductive tax policies, and punitive tax hikes that one former Democrat Senate staffer is quoted in the publication of *POLITICO* calling the House approach—in that person's words—“laughable.”

I hope my Senate colleagues do better. It will be hard for them to do any worse.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, in 2017, my colleague Senator SANDERS said:

The function of reconciliation is to adjust federal spending and revenue, not to enact major changes in social policy.

Now, fast forward to 2021, and Senator SANDERS and many of my Democratic colleagues have changed their tune. You see, Democrats in Congress are doubling down on their efforts to steer America toward the Democratic socialist policies laid out in Senator SANDERS' budget with a \$3.5 trillion spending plan that would be the most significant expansion of our social safety net programs since the 1960s.

Democrats are seeking to enact these sweeping changes through reconciliation—a partisan process, which Senator SANDERS himself said is not meant to be a vehicle for major policy changes. From job-killing corporate tax hikes to small business money grabs and hidden tax increases on the middle class, the Democrats' plan will punish job creators and workers and make us less competitive on the global stage.

Now, perhaps that is part of their plan—to remake the United States of America in the image of Western Europe. It is as if they want to punish businesses while rewarding unemployment and dependence on the Federal Government.

Republicans want to empower Americans to be self-sufficient, to unleash their God-given potential. That, after all, is the promise at the heart of the Declaration of Independence. It is that promise that has led generation after generation of people to our shores so that they, too, can realize the individual liberty, the promise at the heart of America's Declaration of Independence.

Republicans want to provide employment opportunities and a strong economy. We don't want to make people beholden to the government for their livelihood. It is not healthy. That is not freedom. It is not American.

As a young man, I visited the Soviet Union as part of a junior high school soccer exchange trip. I still remember what I saw there. Food was scarce. The water was, too. There were public water stations, where Russians drank from a communal cup. They were desperate for everyday items Americans take for granted: blue jeans, for example; and chewing gum, too. For decades, Russians were denied this because it was a symbol of American culture.

Now, think about that. A government that gives you everything can also take anything away, even chewing gum. Profligate collectivism—you might call it socialism—creates an environment where citizens progressively give up the right to decide how they spend their earnings, how they educate their children, how they get better when they are sick; a system where citizens are frozen on the lower rungs of the ladder of life's opportunity, where upward mobility is unknown.

That is why the Democrats' reckless tax-and-spend proposal goes against everything we believe in this Nation. Among its many defects, their proposal picks winners and losers. It increases our dependence on foreign oil and allows blatant double dipping.

All of this is, of course, incredibly misguided and simply makes no sense when gas prices have jumped 40 percent since January, directly harming middle-income Americans who can't afford a cent more.

Punishing oil and natural gas producers while propping up renewables—many of which have materials directly sourced from communist China—will have disastrous, wide-reaching effects. A 100-percent renewable energy-supported grid will result in blackouts and will make power delivery less reliable for millions of families, not to mention the job losses for the 10 million Americans employed by these industries.

Democrats are also proposing sweeping changes to Medicare. This is a program that is incredibly popular among our senior citizens, and it is already on shaky financial ground. It is projected to reach insolvency within the next 4 years, prior to any changes by the Democrats that will undermine it. But Democrats are determined to add benefits that private plans already cover more efficiently. Adding hearing, vision, and dental under traditional Medicare is duplicative of the coverage provided through Medicare Advantage.

Seniors enjoy their high-performing Medicare plans, which come at little to no additional cost. Expanding Medicare is unnecessary, duplicative, and will come with higher costs, less access, and harm the quality of care providers are able to provide.

These are just a couple of examples, but the Democrats' reckless tax-and-

spend proposal would have harmful consequences across the board for our country and the freedoms we enjoy.

Americans should be outraged—I know Hoosiers are—not only by this radical expansion of government but by the process Democrats are using to ram through their liberal agenda, possibly ramming it through a 50-50 Republican-Democrat equally divided U.S. Senate.

Now, Republicans have stood up to socialism again and again. And we must continue to do so by opposing this reckless tax-and-spending boondoggle. We must protect the American promise and ensure that this remains the land of the free.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today in speaking out against the Democrats' very reckless \$3.5 trillion—that is with a “t”—tax-and-spending spree that CHUCK SCHUMER and NANCY PELOSI are rushing through Congress. They are going to make history if they get this passed. This will be the largest spending bill in our Nation's history. Let me say that again. This will be the largest spending bill in our Nation's history.

Through this bill, Congressional Democrats are trying to reshape the very foundation of our great Nation. They are trying to pass their far-left policies and push the United States of America down the path of socialism. I don't say that lightly. I don't like to use a lot of hyperbole, but that is what is going on.

This reckless tax-and-spending spree bill is packed full of tax increases and new spending programs that will kill hundreds of thousands of jobs; it will reduce economic growth; and it is throwing more fuel on the inflation fire that we see burning right now across this economy. In fact, according to the Tax Foundation, it would reduce take-home pay for low- and middle-income Americans.

It will expand and insert the Federal Government into every aspect of Montanans' and Americans' lives, and it is going to bankrupt our country. You know, I am not actually sure the congressional Democrats understand the impacts of their efforts and what a burden this tax and spending will put on Montana families, Montana small businesses, Montana farmers and ranchers, and the future generations of Montanans.

In fact, a few weeks ago, I heard one House Democrat actually say:

We can't go bankrupt because we have the power to create as much money as we need to spend.

These are the actual words of a Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives who will soon be voting on this legislation.

It is baffling. Montanans and the American people know that money doesn't grow on trees, and I would hope the congressional Democrats know that as well.

Frankly, this mindset is terrifying as I think about the future of our country. The Democrats' reckless spending bill comes at a time when Montanans are already facing skyrocketing prices on everything from gas to groceries. Montanans are feeling the pain in their pocketbooks every day because of these record-high inflation numbers. That is a direct result of the Democrats' and President Biden's tax-and-spending problem. You see, the Democrats already flooded the economy with nearly \$2 trillion in new spending earlier this year on a purely partisan basis, and now we see inflation at a 13-year high.

Think about it. Even if we experience no—in other words, zero additional rise in inflation for the rest of the year, Montanans would still be hit with an almost 5-percent increase in costs for the year.

It is interesting. A few months ago, we heard the words: Well, this is all transitory. It is all transitory. This is going to go away in a few months. Many of us were skeptical and didn't believe it. You are not hearing the word “transitory” anymore coming from the Democrats because if we take a look at the position the Federal Reserve has been talking about, they are telling us inflation is here to stay at north of 5 percent, certainly, this year and at numbers certainly greater than that “2 percent threshold” that was talked about—probably in the 4 percent to 5 percent in the outyears.

If you spend any time at all speaking to leaders in this country, where they are every day looking at the supply chain price of goods, they are telling you there are inflationary pressures in every part of this economy. The absolute last thing we should be doing is spending trillions more taxpayer dollars on top of that \$2 trillion partisan spending package the Democrats embarked on just this past March.

We know that doing so will send inflation much, much higher. You see, inflation is a tax on all Montanans, on all Americans because as prices go up, paychecks shrink. And Democrats have many more tax hikes planned as they look to pay for this spending spree by asking Montana families, Montana small businesses, our farmers and ranchers to foot the bill.

Now, I have heard my Democratic colleagues suggest this bill must be “paid for.” But what does “paid for” mean? What does that mean? It is very simple. It means that Democrats' reckless taxing and spending spree will be paid for by massive tax increases.

Let's go over a few of these tax hikes that Montanans will face if Democrats continue down this reckless path. For starters, this bill is absolutely an assault on small businesses. By the way, small businesses create most of the jobs in this economy. It would gut the 20-percent small business tax deduction, placing small businesses at a disadvantage. This deduction benefited more than 21 million small businesses in 2019, and it generated \$66 billion in

tax savings that these businesses could then reinvest and grow their business, create more jobs, pay their employees more.

These savings help small businesses expand, allows them to compete in this global market, to offer raises as well as bonuses. Removing this tax benefit would make it harder—make it harder—for them to expand and succeed against larger competitors.

The Democrats' reckless tax-and-spending spree bill would also increase the top income tax rate to nearly 40 percent and drastically lower the income thresholds for the top tax bracket.

Some ask: What is fair? What is fair share? Paying 40 percent of your income to the Federal Government is where the Democrats want to take the top rate. Since most small businesses are structured in what is known as a passthrough, meaning business profits are taxed as income, this tax hike would devastate our small business owners. In fact, these two provisions alone would hurt Montana's small businesses drastically.

Over 99 percent—listen to this again. Over 99 percent of Montana businesses are small businesses. We can't let this happen. This would destroy livelihoods, harm local communities and local economies. In fact, the combined tax rate for passthrough businesses would rise above 50 percent in 40 out of 50 States, including the State of Montana.

This reckless spending bill will also supercharge marriage penalties in the Tax Code. You heard that right. You see, buried in the Democrats' massive tax-and-spending spree is also an attack on marriage. Married couples could be facing higher taxes simply because they are married.

Democrats have also proposed the elimination of what is known as stepped-up basis. This is a backdoor death tax that will hit Montana family farms and ranchers particularly hard. You see, in Montana, agriculture is our way of life. Our farmers and our ranchers work hard to put food on the table for their families, for our great State, for the country, and the entire world. The last thing that Montana farmers and ranchers need are more taxes, and that is what the Democrats are trying to do.

In fact, Senator THUNE and I led a letter to President Biden, which was signed by every Member of the Republican conference, urging the President to reconsider this proposal. As of now, this is not currently in the House Democrats' bill. But, unfortunately, the President and many of my colleagues here in this Chamber, on the other side of the aisle, continue to insist that this be included in their bill.

This reckless proposal will also damage our international competitiveness. This is about a global economy. This is about winning the global race because they want to raise the corporate tax rate to 26.5 percent. If you combine

that with State corporate tax rates, the average corporate tax burden would rise to about 31 percent. And there is a startling piece of information here. You take 31 percent and guess what. That rate would be higher than communist China. In fact, it would be one of the highest corporate tax rates in the entire world.

The Democrats don't understand why jobs leave our shores. I will tell you one reason why is because of tax policy. When you raise the rates higher than communist China, it is going to have a direct effect on jobs here in the United States.

Do you know who is cheering about this tax increase in this provision? I will tell you who is cheering about it. China is. They know the Democrats' tax increase will force American businesses to send American jobs overseas. That is the last thing we need because we need to be supporting American businesses, supporting the American worker, the American family, the American farmer, the American rancher and the hard work they do every day.

Sadly, the Democrats' reckless tax-and-spending spree does exactly the opposite. Sadly, it will put China and our global competitors first.

For all these reasons and many more, I am very concerned about what will happen if this dangerous proposal becomes law. I intend to fight vigorously, along with many of my colleagues here, against it every step of the way. I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Montana who just talked about the impact of this tax-and-spend bill on his constituents in Montana. I will say the same is true in 49 other States, including my State of Ohio.

This is, we are told, the biggest tax increase on America in over 50 years. So this is a big deal. In terms of the spending we have been hearing today, it is the largest spending package ever. In inflation-adjusted terms, it is probably the largest social spending package since the New Deal. That is what we are talking about here. This would fundamentally change our country in so many ways.

It is good that MIKE CRAPO, who is the top Republican on the Finance Committee, asked us to come on the floor today just to kind of talk about it because our constituents need to know what is going on. They need to understand what the impact would be on them, their lives, their futures.

There are new taxes being proposed in this on pretty much everything—small businesses. That was just talked about. Most businesses in Ohio and around the country are not what they call C corporations. They are passthroughs, like subchapter S—sole proprietors, partnerships. That is about 80 percent, 90 percent of the businesses. It is the smaller businesses. They get hit.

There are actually taxes on marriage because of the marriage penalty.

There are taxes on death because of the increase in the estate and gift tax. There are taxes on capital gains, which that is the part of our Code where you try to give people a little lower rate on longer term investment, try to encourage risk-taking and investments so that you can grow the economy, create jobs.

There are also a bunch of other taxes in here.

But the one that I want to talk about today is the tax on corporations because it gets less attention. People think: Gosh, they are big corporations. They can handle more tax increases. Some of them aren't paying taxes.

Well, they use the Tax Code sometimes that we set up here to avoid paying the full amount of taxes, but they pay plenty of taxes. When you increase the taxes, everyone says the same thing—whether it is the Congressional Budget Office, which is the nonpartisan group up here in the U.S. Senate, or whether it is the Joint Committee on Taxation, which is a nonpartisan group up here in the U.S. Senate or House, or outside groups looking at it—you increase those taxes on these companies, who pays it? Workers, primarily, and, second, consumers.

We just talked about inflation. Think about it. All this new stimulus spending—because that is what it is—will add to inflation. But so will these higher taxes because part of what happens is, if you have a higher tax on you, and you are trying to sell something, you have the same costs—maybe even higher costs coming in—you are going to charge more. Therefore, when you go to the store to buy something, there is going to be more inflation.

All of this encourages more, not less, inflation at a time when inflation is already unacceptably high. I think everybody agrees with that.

When the Democrats did the \$1.9 trillion package back in March—\$1.9 trillion, that used to be a lot of money—we just sort of say “\$1.9 trillion.” But when they did that, everybody said: Oh my gosh, that is too much stimulus spending. It is going to cause inflation. The promoters of that said: No, it won't. It won't do that because the economy is so weak. It will be good for the economy.

Well, it overheated the economy. And Larry Summers at the time, who was the former Secretary of the Treasury in a Democratic administration and economist on the other side of the aisle—he warned about it as did others. He said: Look, this is going to fuel inflation.

Boy, has it.

So, yes, people are getting some wage gains right now, higher pay. I like that a lot. I think it is great. Before 2019—before COVID hit—thanks to the tax reforms of 2017, primarily, in my view, wages were going up. February of 2020 was the 19th straight month of wage gains over 3 percent annually. My gosh,

that was great—mostly lower and middle-income earners, by the way.

Some of that is happening now, but it is all being eaten up. If you have a 5-percent pay wage raise this year, you probably got nothing because you are going to have about 5 percent inflation. Your dollar is not going as far. So these are all issues that we have got to make sure the American people understand.

In terms of the corporations and what the problem is there, remember that before the tax reform in 2017, we had a lot of companies that were leaving our shores—literally. They were saying: Do you know what? Our Tax Code is so bad in America that we are going to invert—that is the name the economists gave it—literally move their headquarters overseas to escape our uncompetitive Tax Code.

I hated that, and I hope all Americans did. I hope all Members of the Senate did. I think they did. They said: Why would we want to encourage companies to go overseas? That way, their investments and their jobs are tending to go overseas as well.

But it wasn't just that. We had a lot of companies in the United States being bought by foreign companies. If you think about it, that made all the sense in the world. The foreign governments had a much better Tax Code for them, so they could buy a U.S. company and make more money on it than a U.S. company could under our Tax Code. Again, it is not what we wanted.

We had a situation where the companies were going overseas in every sector of our economy. I am a beer drinker, so I was particularly concerned about the beer companies, and every single one of them went foreign. They were big. The largest U.S. beer company was Sam Adams, which had about a 1.4-percent market share. The rest of them all went overseas. So that is what was happening.

There is some new data out showing that since the 2017 tax reforms were put in place, there was a 50-percent increase in American companies buying foreign companies and a 25-percent decrease in foreign companies buying our companies. That was good. That was good. But now we are talking about going right back to the bad old days.

One significant factor in companies going overseas and U.S. companies getting bought out by foreigners was our high tax rate of 35 percent—the highest in the developed world. Everyone heard about that. But, also, there was a lack of enticements to keep valuable intellectual property here in the United States; whereas, other countries provided that. Also, unlike other countries, we were in what was called a worldwide tax system, where we were requiring U.S. companies to pay taxes on their foreign earnings at the high U.S. rate, the 35-percent rate. Almost all of our competitors don't do that. They use the so-called territorial system, where you only tax in the foreign jurisdiction where you did the business. You are not taxed twice. That is

one reason we were losing, so we changed that.

The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act took bold steps to reassert our competitiveness as a country. We lowered the corporate tax rate to 21 percent. We went to a territorial-type system—not entirely territorial, as we still had a minimum tax, but we created an incentive to stay here. We created jobs and investments here. We lowered the corporate rate, but we also had other incentives to create more intellectual property here in America.

As a result, by the way, the corporate inversions stopped. They stopped. Instead of losing companies overseas, again, we started to buy more companies overseas and bring that investment to America.

The foreign-derived intangible income provision, which provided a reduced tax rate for U.S.-based businesses on high-return foreign market income served by U.S. operations, resulted in companies like Cisco, Qualcomm, Synopsys, Google, Facebook, and others bringing back intellectual property that was overseas. So it actually worked in the way we had hoped it would. It brought IP back here. That means jobs. That means research. Others retained their intellectual property here in the United States, like Intel and Disney and General Mills and others, because of these tax laws, because they were coming to us and saying: Why are we here in America, doing this? We should do it overseas based on what Congress has provided as a tax environment for us.

The largest U.S. companies during that time period increased their domestic research and development spending by 25 percent, to \$707 billion. They increased their capital expenditures by 20 percent, to \$1.4 trillion. That is all good. Again, workers saw real benefits: a 50-year low in unemployment; strong wage growth, particularly for low- and middle-income workers; the lowest poverty rate in the history of the country. We started to keep track of it back in the fifties. This follows an earlier study by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, or CBO, that found that 70 percent of the tax cuts ended up going into workers' wages and benefits. So workers and businesses both benefited in this opportunity economy. It was driving a lot of promising growth in the United States.

The Democrats' tax plan would systematically dismantle so many of these pro-growth tax cuts and reforms that Congress put in place in 2017. Under this new proposal, the corporate rate would be raised from 21 percent to about 28 percent. When combined with the average State and local corporate taxes in America, U.S. businesses will be on the hook for an average tax rate of about 32 percent—once again giving us the highest rate of taxation in the developed world.

The Democrats would also increase the global intangible low-taxed income

rate, called GILTI, and the base erosion and anti-abuse tax rate, called the BEAT, which would punish U.S. companies that work to serve foreign markets. We should like that. We want U.S. companies to create jobs here to support their international sales. The proposal would modify this GILTI calculation to a country-by-country basis, making it even more difficult to compute and track U.S. tax liabilities for companies operating overseas—again, a disincentive that discourages investment in new and emerging markets. Why would we want to do that?

Through these policies, Democrats would be creating a tax environment hostile to businesses and harmful to workers. According to the International Tax Competitiveness Index, the Democrats' plan would cause the United States to drop steeply down the rankings from 21st to 28th in the world among developed countries. It is the same ranking we had, by the way, before the 2017 tax reforms.

Many businesses will make what is unfortunately a completely rational decision to move their headquarters again. We will see inversions again, taking with them thousands of good-paying jobs and billions of dollars in assets. Others that choose to stay here will nonetheless become prime targets for acquisition, as they were before, by businesses in other countries, like China, that would have a lower tax rate than we.

But who ultimately bears the brunt of these Democratic tax hikes on businesses? Again, it is the workers. Just as the Congressional Budget Office found that 70 percent of the corporate tax cuts go into workers' wages and benefits, the Tax Foundation found that 70 percent of tax increases are borne by workers. It is no surprise, then, that the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation, right here in this Congress, found that two-thirds of the Democrats' corporate tax hike would fall on lower and middle-income taxpayers. Let me repeat that. The JCT, a nonpartisan committee here in Congress, found that two-thirds of the Democrats' corporate tax hikes would fall on lower and middle-income tax taxpayers.

By the way, that is about 100 million taxpayers who make less than \$400,000 a year. So much for the pledge that no one under \$400,000 in income would possibly be affected.

So I look at these facts, and I just can't understand why we would want to move to this kind of a tax plan. Why would the American people support tax hikes that are going to be bad for workers and bad for our competitiveness as a country? Why are we punishing workers? They are the ones who get the short end of the stick here.

Let's focus on what works—on encouraging investment and growth here in the United States of America. That helps workers. Let's not go down a path that will once again send U.S. jobs and U.S. investment overseas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, the Democratic Party's reckless \$3.5 trillion tax-and-spend reconciliation—their spending spree—will be a disaster for the American family.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget warns that this spree could increase the deficit not by \$3.5 trillion but by \$5 trillion—a little bit of a bait and switch. Oh, it is only 3.5—only 3.5. It turns out the independent Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget says, no, more like 5.5.

Now, today, my colleagues have shed light on the many costs of this economic—I don't know what to call it—potential catastrophe. Here are just a few in speaking from the perspective of my State.

If our goal is to get back to the prepandemic economy, which, by the way, was the best economy of my lifetime—an economy in which there was record-low unemployment, which is to say record-high employment for women, African Americans, Hispanics, the disabled, high school dropouts; record-high employment for veterans, you name it—then this is not the way to go.

By the way, the wage growth in this prepandemic economy was disproportionately for those in the lower quintile of our Nation's economy. So those who were lower waged to begin with were seeing the greater growth in their wages under the previous economy.

Why does this matter a lot for my State? Louisiana is a hub of innovation for energy and other technologies. Innovation creates jobs, raises wages, and puts food on the tables of working families in my State. Congress should encourage that. These are not the Ph.D.s in solar energy; these are the people who produce the oil and gas or use that oil and gas to make the plastics that matter so much to a modern economy.

By the way, you can't help but notice the hike in the price of gasoline that has just occurred, and now they are using the term "energy poverty" because there is a hike in the price of electricity. This is hitting the families as a hidden tax.

But this bill squashes that innovation, and it is the new taxes and the increased taxes as to how the spending spree is financed.

As once said, "The power to tax is the power to destroy," but these taxes are destroying the jobs and wage increases that have been so important to these working families over the last 4 years.

The rhetoric, of course, is that this is about a few tax hikes on the wealthiest of Americans, but what we have learned from the Joint Committee on Taxation is that two-thirds of these tax increases will fall upon lower and middle-income families.

As one example, again, House Democrats propose hiking the corporate tax

rate to an uncompetitive 26.5 percent. The wealthy will still be wealthy. Studies show that when you raise corporate tax rates, it translates into lower wages for the employees and lower dividends and stock escalation for the shareholders. OK. So that is the employee, the operator in the refinery who shows up to make sure that it runs safely, who goes home and helps pay the rent or pay off his mortgage, and it hurts the retiree, who is hoping that her stock portfolio will allow her to live a better life when she retires.

It is billed as a hike to the corporations, those greedy corporations, but that hike is felt by the workers and the retirees. So when a family begins to figure out how to pay their higher electricity bill, how to pay their increased cost of gasoline with the inflation that has been eating up their budget—they have to pay more for food, and their children are going back to school, we hope, so they are buying those supplies—they will not get the wage increase they had previously hoped for. This hurts the entrepreneur who is trying to start a small business, and by starting that small business, he employs other people. Rolling back the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, raising taxes on working families, will not help them.

President Biden has proposed nearly doubling the capital gains tax, raising it to 39.5 percent. Again, who does that hurt? It hurts, again, the retirees who have been saving for their entire lives so that they can have good lives when they retire.

The Democrats are really earning the title of the “tax-and-spend party” with this monstrosity. These taxes will stunt our economy, and the needless trillions in spending will skyrocket already increasing inflation, further impacting working American families.

Mark my words: This will be President Biden’s economic Afghanistan.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor to join my colleagues in opposing the Democrats’ reckless tax-and-spending spree.

The bill that we are talking about is the centerpiece of BERNIE SANDERS’ socialist plan for America. The Democrats’ plan does play favorites, however, and what they really focus on doing, interestingly, is hurting the working folks in rural America to give tax breaks to wealthy families in big cities in liberal States.

The reason I tell you this is that this bill includes huge subsidies for people who buy and drive electric vehicles. You don’t see a lot of that in rural States with long distances between community to community.

Well, the government is already giving billions of taxpayer dollars to electric vehicle manufacturers and for owners. Nearly 80 percent of the tax credits go to households making at least \$100,000 a year.

So what is happening now? The thing is, right now, the roads are being used, chewed up, vehicles on the road, and how is it paid for? Well, the highway trust fund. And how does that get paid for? People paying the gas tax.

People who use electric vehicles do the same wear and tear to our highways and pay nothing in terms of a use fee to use the highways as they do. So they are paying nothing in, they are using the services, they use the roads for free, and now they want subsidies.

And that is what the Democrats are offering. This bill would give up to \$12,500 to married couples to buy electric vehicles—\$12,500.

What kind of income? Maybe there is an income limit. I mean, you don’t want to give it to rich people. So the Democrats said: OK, if you are a single person earning up to \$400,000 a year, you can get a subsidy. If you are a married couple earning up to \$800,000 a year, you still get the subsidy because, boy oh boy, we are going to push those electric vehicles for the big cities and for our Democrat colleagues.

Democrats have gone so far as to even want to spend \$7 billion to subsidize luxury electric bicycles—astounding.

Now, these giveaways have a pricetag, and that is why Democrats want to pile enormous new taxes on the American people. They propose more than \$2 trillion in additional new taxes. This would be the largest tax increase in half a century, but it is still not enough to pay for all the new spending they want to do.

That is why they are trying a backdoor tax increase. What the Democrats are proposing is putting the IRS on steroids—supersizing the IRS. They want to increase funding for the Internal Revenue Service by \$80 billion.

The IRS says: Hey, give us a lot more money. We can hire a lot more agents, and they can collect more money, even more than the \$80 billion that you give us.

So last week, Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen said she wants to make banks report every transaction that is over \$600—she didn’t just say it; she wrote it in a letter to the chairman of the House Budget Committee—so they can watch and look at, investigate, spy on families all across the country.

I have heard more from people of Wyoming about this one letter from the Secretary of the Treasury than I have on many, many issues over the years.

Every time somebody pays their rent, the IRS will now know about it. Make a car payment; the IRS will now know about it. Pay the plumber; the IRS will know about it.

The amount of power that the IRS has will now be more than ever before. Democrats are going to send the IRS to shake down people for every last dime they can. It is too much power. It is too much of an invasion of privacy. The American people find this dangerous and scary.

The IRS is already one of the most powerful and unaccountable Agencies in the Federal Government, if not the most powerful and unaccountable Agency in the Federal Government. Now the Democrats want to unleash it even further.

I just want to talk about one last tax, and it is a hidden tax, but it surely hurts many Americans, especially the poor. And it is a tax called inflation.

Inflation is happening because Democrats borrowed and spent too much money already. If they pass this, prices are going to continue to rise. People go to the grocery store; they are paying more. People go to the gas station; they are paying more.

The Democratic Party’s priorities are backward, but under the Democratic Party today, prices are going up. Yet they are giving kickbacks to the wealthy, their powerful friends. This is heading America toward bankruptcy. The American people don’t want higher taxes. They want higher wages, lower prices, more jobs, more opportunity. They don’t want this reckless tax-and-spending spree—no, not one bit.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, so we are approaching a conversation about two big issues here—one is a government shutdown, which I have challenged this body a lot about of late to say: Why are we approaching another government shutdown? And then, on top of that, we can’t seem to get any of the 12 appropriations bills done, which there are 12 of them to be done by September 30, but exactly zero of them have actually gone through committee because this body is so consumed with focusing on a \$3½ trillion new entitlement package—\$3½ trillion—a straight partisan package that would create a whirlwind of new entitlements.

To give you a perspective of how big 3½ trillion is, 3½ trillion is about the total revenue that the Federal Government brings in in an entire year with all taxes, all fees. All everything is about \$3½ trillion. This is an additional package on top of that, of entitlements of 3½ trillion new dollars in entitlements.

Now, if I go back to 2017, when we were trying to be able to supercharge the economy and to be able to create more jobs, we passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. And in 2017, when we passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, it did exactly what we wanted it to do. It simplified the Tax Code for the vast majority of individual filers, it reduced taxes for just about every single filer, and it increased wages across the country. And it increased revenue coming into the Treasury because it stimulated our economy, which created more jobs, which created more opportunity for more people to make money. When more people make more money, they pay more in taxes, and it comes and covers it. That is what we did.

My Democratic colleagues are now proposing \$2.1 trillion in tax increases—tax increases not to cover our deficit, tax increases to create new entitlements and to spend even more money. And the several ways they do it are very, very painful, as I read through their proposal.

One of those is that they are proposing to change the corporate tax piece, which sounds so good to say: We are just going to change the corporate tax piece so only corporations will pay this—the problem being 1.4 million C corporations in the United States, and 84 percent of those corporations that are out there have 20 employees or less.

So they can throw around the big corporations, and everyone thinks it is Conoco and Apple. It is—the vast majority—small businesses designed as C corps.

And how are they going to make them more competitive? They are going to make those C corps more competitive by raising the tax rate for all those corporations to make their tax rate higher than China.

Let me run that past you again. To make us more competitive globally, they are going to make our tax rate higher than China's tax rate, while we are trying to be able to compete with China on the world stage.

Not only that, there is a global minimum tax that is already out there that is a small tax that is out there for every corporation. You know who has that already? The United States does. You know how that was created? It was created in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in 2017 to make sure companies couldn't scam out and couldn't move their money into other places, that they would be here. But if they decided to move to a tax haven, it wouldn't be there. But we set it at a rate to make us competitive.

They want to take that rate and supercharge it and make it one of the top rates in the world.

Now, the statement from Janet Yellen is that she has already talked to all of the other countries about this global tax, and they have said: Yes, we are on board with a global tax. You go first.

Can I tell you something? I remember being a middle-school boy—any male does. I remember being a middle-school boy and hanging out with my friends and all of us were talking about doing something dumb, and it always ended with someone saying: Let's all do it. You go first.

That is what is being proposed right now by Janet Yellen, saying: Let's have the highest tax rate in the world, and other countries will come and match it, and they will be competitive with us. You go first.

I can assure you, that didn't work out well as a middle-school boy; that is not going to work out well for our companies, and it will not work out for our economy.

There is this statement that should be ringing in the back of everyone's

head, this simple statement that was made years ago called inversions. Do you remember that old statement when we used to talk about corporate inversions? That was American companies being bought by international companies and moved overseas for their headquarters. That was a common conversation during the Obama administration, but something happened. That term went away because in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act bill, that stopped, and now American companies started buying foreign companies and moving them here, and everything shifted.

This \$3.5 trillion monstrosity of new entitlements will flip that again, and we will start hearing the word "inversions" because American companies will be moved overseas. It is going to happen when we have a really bad, uncompetitive rate.

Now, people may again say: Well, we are just going to stick it to rich people, but everyone kind of quietly knows that prices will go up, fewer people will get raises in those companies, and it will be less competitive for the United States long term. Everyone knows that.

This \$3½ trillion bill of new entitlements is also funded by giving the IRS billions of additional dollars to do more enforcement and to allow the IRS, as Janet Yellen has asked for over and over again, to be able to track transactions of Americans of \$600 or more, either deposited in your account or out of your banking account.

I can assure you, banks all over my State in Oklahoma are already saying: Don't make us turn in the transactions of every one of our people to the IRS. Why does the IRS need this?

Interestingly enough, I have actually asked the Commissioner of the IRS: Can you manage that much information?

And his answer was a very straightforward: No, we can't even manage the information we have now, much less the amount of information that would come at us of transactions of \$600 and more.

This is the wrong direction. I could go on and on. In fact, I could give you 3½ trillion reasons why this is the wrong direction. It is the wrong policy. It is the wrong thing stepping out of an economy that is damaged by COVID. It is the wrong set of policies long term for our economy. It discourages work. And what we are facing right now in workplaces all over the country, from small to large companies, they are all saying the same thing: It is tough to get workers. Well, if you think it is tough to get workers now, wait until there is \$3½ trillion in new entitlements dumped into the economy and see how hard it is to be able to hire workers then. This is the wrong direction for our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, that wraps up the presentations that we

have for today, and I want to thank my Republican colleagues on the Finance Committee for coming and helping to explain the dangers of this incredibly reckless taxing-and-spending spree that is being proposed here in Congress.

As we get more details, as this package gets played out, we will be back to explain further the dangers that there are. But I think we have shown very clearly today that not only is the spending going to be so damaging to this country, but the tax plan that is accompanying it will make us less competitive if, in fact, not completely back into last place in terms of competitiveness globally and will impact people all across this country in their own tax burdens and their own inflationary cost pressures, not just those who make over \$400,000 per year.

This tax-and-spend spree must be stopped.

I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I am going to speak and make a unanimous consent request in a moment, and I am so anxious because a number of my Republican colleagues—I remember being in middle school as well. You don't want to be the first; you don't want to be the last. Unfortunately, that is where we rank right now in terms of comparison to OECD, in terms of raising corporate revenue. I don't think that is fair for hard-working Americans.

And the ranking member on the Senate Finance Committee is someone that I have huge, huge respect for and have worked with on many, many items. We are going to have a chance to debate part of these components, I think, going forward. But I would say this. When I first got the note: Well, the Senator from Idaho—it was one of my first times I was a gang member. The Senator from Idaho and I were part of something called the "Gang of Six," and we were audacious enough to think that a proposal put forward by the so-called Simpson-Bowles Commission to take on the debt and deficit issues in our country was worthwhile and worth us both, frankly, offending folks in each of our respective parties.

We were astonished that in the 2010–2011 timeframe, the country was looking at \$15 trillion of debt. We, obviously, were not very successful, since we are now at about \$27 trillion in debt; and, I would argue, both sides bear lots of responsibility. I believe we cut revenues way too much. In the last year or so alone, we jointly added \$5 trillion-plus in terms of spending around COVID.

But the one thing, I think, we both realized was what we shouldn't do is ever mess with the full faith and credit of the United States of America because that is like giving an irresponsible politician a hand grenade and saying: Let that politician pull the pin out at any moment in time.

Well, there may be some folks now who are prepared to pull the pin out and put in jeopardy the full faith and credit of United States of America. If that happens over the next 30 days, the one thing that we can be guaranteed is it will rock the bond markets. It will rock how America views—how the rest of the world views America's ability to honor its commitments.

I fear, unless somebody—and, again, my friend from Idaho, I know, realizes this as well, is that if we mess with this, if we were to see—pull that hand grenade and have it explode on all of us, the American people aren't going to decide whose fault it was or whose responsibility it was. All they are going to end up seeing, I believe, is that interest rates are going to go up because we have not dealt with the debt and deficit. At \$27 trillion, if interest rates go up 100 basis point, 1 percent, that is the equivalent of a—call it a tax or spending obligation—of \$200 billion a year of additional interest payments. And those interest payments come before Medicare, come before Social Security, and come before payment to our soldiers.

So I know we are rallying against spending, but let's make sure—and we both ought to bear some responsibility on this—we don't mess with the full faith and credit of the United States; because if we do that, in addition to all the things that you are making criticisms of this reconciliation plan, you have just added another \$2 trillion of spending—mandatory spending—over the next decade.

So we can agree or disagree on the reconciliation pieces and what parts, but let's guarantee one way or the other we don't mess with the full faith and credit of the United States.

And I thank my good friend from Idaho and all the good work that we have done together and continue to do together. And I am anxious to come back and—you know, some parts of your critique, I agree with; many I don't. I know I am holding up also my colleague and friend from the Intelligence Committee, the Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—CALENDAR NO. 347

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to seek unanimous consent to confirm Mr. Matthew G. Olsen, President Biden's nominee to be the next Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division at the Department of Justice.

As we all know, America recently marked the 20th anniversary of one of the darkest days in our history: the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

As chairman of the Intelligence Committee, I am privy to the intelligence information being collected from across our IC community, which sets forth the myriad threats our Nation continues to face both at home and abroad. And the Senator from Texas, who is a great member of the Intelligence Committee, is aware of those threats as well.

Our ability to counter these threats and ensure our national security is dependent on having qualified individuals nominated by the President in place so they can do their jobs and, importantly, be held accountable through the confirmation process.

Prior to the attacks of 9/11—and this was one of the things that were pointed out by the commission afterwards—literally 57 percent of the Federal Government's Senate-confirmed top, top national security jobs remain vacant—57 percent. And one of the key recommendations of the 9/11 Commission was to accelerate the process of national security appointments.

Unfortunately, if we fast-forward 20 years, today you would think we would have learned the lesson, but today the situation is actually worse than it was prior to 9/11. Of the 170 confirmable national security-related positions, only 44 have been filled. That is just 26 percent. You know, my math shows that that means we have got about 74 percent that are unfilled. We have got to do better.

That is why it is essential for the Senate to swiftly confirm every single qualified national security intelligence professional whose nomination is pending on the Senate floor. That is why I strongly support the swift confirmation of Matt Olsen.

The National Security Division, or NSD, at the DOJ has remained without a confirmed senior leader for several months. Created in 2006, the NSD consolidates the Department's primary national security operations and serves as a key link between the Department and the intelligence community. Its mission is to carry out the Department's highest priority: protecting the United States from threats to our national security by pursuing justice through law.

Matt Olsen is eminently qualified for this position, given his years of service at the DOJ; as general counsel for the NSA; and a director of the National Counterterrorism Center, or NCTC, in which capacity he regularly briefed our Intelligence Committee. Matt is a consummate intelligence professional and an effective leader of the highest caliber and personal and professional integrity.

The NSD needs a confirmed leader in place. So I am urging my colleagues to confirm Matt Olsen immediately.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination, Calendar No. 347, Matthew G. Olsen, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, it is ironic that I come to the floor to be with my friend, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, with whom I have proudly served and with whom I have worked on many different projects within the intelligence community and the jurisdiction of that committee. But this is one where we clearly see things differently.

Mr. Olsen, for most of his career—and it has been a distinguished career—has operated as a nonpartisan public servant. But as Senator GRASSLEY, ranking member on the Judiciary Committee, said at the time he had his hearing there, once the previous administration took office, it was like a switch got flipped and he turned into a partisan warrior.

Over the last few years, Mr. Olsen has made a series of serious ultrapartisan statements. Prior to the 2016 election, he said that ISIS supported Donald Trump for President. Following the election, he claimed that the electoral college should be abolished because it is a national security threat. He signed on to a number of letters hysterically criticizing then-Attorney General Barr and the Justice Department, and he failed to disclose these writings and other critical information to the Judiciary Committee during the hearing on his nomination.

I believe now, more than ever, it is absolutely critical that the Justice Department and our intelligence community operate free from political influence and bias. But I have no confidence that, if confirmed, Mr. Olsen's partisan switch will get flipped back off. I fear he will continue to pursue his political objectives from within the Department, using the powerful tools of the Department of Justice to pave the way for his partisan political agenda.

And lest anybody think these concerns are unprecedented or groundless, let me just point out that we now have a former lawyer with the FBI that has pled guilty for falsifying an application to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court in the process of investigating an American citizen. He has now pled guilty and is now serving probation, a lawyer with the FBI who erroneously communicated information to the court with which they relied upon to issue a warrant to surveil an American citizen, using the powers of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

And then, just this last week, another lawyer has been indicted by Mr. Durham, the special counsel—somebody who has a distinguished career as a former Federal prosecutor and has worked at a prominent firm that typically represents the Democratic Party.

He now has been indicted for lying to the FBI, and it rises out of a conversation he had with a general counsel at the FBI, suggesting that there was some link between the Trump administration—or Trump organization and a criminal-linked Russian lender called Alfa Bank.

The indictment says that Michael Sussmann lied about the capacity in which he was providing this information to the FBI. But, in fact, what he did is prepare white papers using confidential information obtained from a technology client and fed that to the FBI while he claimed to be just a good citizen wanting to pass this information along when he was actually on the payroll of the Clinton campaign.

And, obviously, then talking to the press, leaking this narrative to the press, this has, I think, contributed to this false narrative of somehow that the Russians colluded with then-Candidate Trump in order to win the election. There has been no evidence at all, whether if you look at the inspector general report—Inspector General Horowitz—about the now debunked Steele dossier, which supposedly was the basis upon which the FBI opened their investigation.

So what we are talking about is people in positions of trust and confidence in the U.S. Government abusing their power, lying to the FBI, and lying to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court in order to pursue a partisan political objective.

Now, I have no idea what Mr. Olsen would do, but I don't think we can take any risks, given the fact he has now turned into a partisan warrior. We have got ample examples of people who, perhaps against their better judgment, have thrown into this resistance attitude and simply forgotten their professional responsibilities. And when it comes to the intelligence community and national security, we don't need any more partisan warriors in these positions of trust. These should be nonpartisan professionals.

So I don't think Mr. Olsen has certainly satisfied me or many of my other colleagues that he can flip that partisan warrior switch off. For that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I just want to make a couple of quick comments in response to my friend from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. We have worked on a number of—or continue to work on a number of important items. But I think it is—various—he is citing a couple of lawyers at the front end of the legal process that have either been arrested or have not gone through the whole judicial process yet.

I don't have the whole list in front of me, but I would be happy to present for the record the list of individuals affiliated with the Trump campaign who have been arrested and convicted and pled guilty because of lying to the FBI or involvement with Russia. I think our investigation, of which I am quite, quite proud—bipartisan, successful—clearly showed Russian interference in the 2016 elections.

We have seen the results of the Mueller investigation. I can't recall

the exact number of convictions that arose out of that. And I agree with my friend, the Senator from Texas, that we don't want—the last thing I want is any more partisanship between the intelligence community.

And that is why I just again want to cite for the record the individuals—yes, Mr. Olsen joined a lot of intelligence professionals in raising concerns about the way the previous administration ran the intelligence community. Frankly, I think they ran it, in many ways, disrespectful to the folks who worked in that community.

But, again, talking about Matt Olsen and his career, I have got a letter here that has got literally hundreds of intelligence and DOJ professionals who support Mr. Olsen. Let me just cite a couple of them—all of them individuals, by the way, who have served Republican Presidents: Michael Chertoff, as we all know, Assistant Attorney General, also then subsequently head of DHS; Zach Terwilliger, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, served under President Trump; Kenneth Wainstein, U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, 2004 to 2006, under President Bush; Charles Rosenberg, served under President Bush in the Southern District and the Eastern District; Paul McNulty, again, served under President Bush, Eastern District of Virginia, U.S. attorney; Michael Mukasey, Attorney General under President Bush; Jesse Liu, U.S. attorney under President Trump in the District of Columbia. The list goes on and on.

Mr. DURBIN. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. WARNER. All I am hoping is that we would get a chance to debate Mr. Olsen's qualifications and bring it to the floor for a vote. Instead, we have a whole clump of individuals who have been put on hold, a process that 99.9 percent of Americans don't understand.

I think Mr. Olsen's career and his service to our country deserves a free and fulsome debate. Those individuals who don't want to vote for him, have at it. But we are not getting that opportunity because—and it is not my friend from Texas. Let me be clear. He is not the person who placed holds. That process is taking place, and, unfortunately, I believe Mr. Olsen is not going to have his—not even his day in court but his day on the floor of the Senate, which I think, with his service to our country, he merits and deserves.

Mr. DURBIN. If the Senator would yield for a question?

Mr. WARNER. Of course.

Mr. DURBIN. As the chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, we have joint committee jurisdiction between the Intelligence and the Judiciary Committee in dealing with this nomination.

This is an extraordinary individual. And I have to raise the most basic question, and that is: At this moment in history, is this the right moment to leave this spot vacant? To not have someone in leadership, a gentleman

whom you have noted has bipartisan support for his intelligence credentials?

You mentioned quite a few names of those supporting him. A couple of the names of those supporting him that you did not mention: former NSA Director, GEN Keith Alexander; former Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell; Senator Saxby Chambliss, our friend and former colleague who served on the Intelligence Committee as a vice chair—all in support of Mr. Olsen's nomination.

And I would say, at this moment in history, without going into any graphic detail or classified information, but to have this kind of vacancy in this spot, do you believe this has an impact on our security as a nation?

Mr. WARNER. I would say to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, you know, we all reflected recently where we were 20 years ago on 9/11. But one of the astounding things that came out of the report after 9/11 was that, at that moment, on 9/11 in 2001, 57 percent of the senior officials in the intelligence community had not been confirmed. Those positions weren't filled. The amazing thing is, 20 years later, 74 percent of those top positions are not filled. I think that is a disservice to the memory of those who perished on 9/11, and I think it is unfortunate, to say the least.

If Members have, in good faith, concerns with Mr. Olsen, let's debate and have at it. But the idea of a large block of intelligence and law enforcement professionals—and we need this position at the Justice Department—sitting unfilled because of an individual Member, on an issue not related to their qualifications, to put a blanket hold on a series of this President's nominees does not make our Nation safer.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, sir.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, what I was referring to earlier are examples of abuse of power by people in the U.S. Government who are in a position to do things to average citizens that, frankly, if they can do them to powerful individuals like candidates for President or our sitting officeholders, what is the little guy supposed to do?

If people are so blinded by their partisanship or their desire to get somebody that they violate their oath, they violate the law, and abuse power, what is the average man and woman supposed to do?

You know, it reminds me a little bit of the hearing that we had just a couple of days ago in the Judiciary Committee, where this monster named Larry Nassar, an Olympic physician for 18 years, systematically and routinely sexually assaulted and abused young female Olympic athletes.

And for years, these Olympic athletes tried to get the FBI to investigate their allegations against Dr. Nassar.

And it took an extended period of time—I think it was a year and a half—before the FBI actually undertook the investigation. But it took a couple of our colleagues—people like Senator BLUMENTHAL from Connecticut, Senator JERRY MORAN from Kansas—in order to stay on this issue until, finally, this monster, Dr. Nassar, was charged with crimes and convicted and now is going to serve in prison the rest of his life.

But it haunts me to think, if these elite Olympic athletes whose names are known all around the world could not get the government to respond to their assault and to do them justice, what chance do the rest of us have? I am not worried about Members of Congress; I am worried about my 29 million constituents.

And so the examples I gave of Mr. Clinesmith, who lied to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court in order to get a warrant to illegally surveil an American citizen—that is an abuse of power that causes me very grave concern.

And when I read the indictment of Michael Sussman lying to the FBI about his connection to the Clinton campaign, while he compiled information that was confidential, gave it to the FBI, claimed to just be a good citizen and not representing any client, when in fact he was on the payroll of the Clinton campaign, and he was systematically leaking this information to the press to feed this narrative about Russian collusion—which has obsessed Congress and the country for years.

And now we know there is no factual basis for the allegations against then-Candidate Trump or then later President Trump. The Russian collusion narrative was not true, but it was fed by partisans who abused their power in order to gain politically.

So I don't know Mr. Olsen that well. Like I said, I know he has had a distinguished career. But something clearly snapped when he became a partisan lawyer. And I simply do not have confidence that he will not abuse his power in pursuit of his partisan aims.

There are better people that the President could nominate to serve in this sensitive position, and I will not, in good conscience, agree to simply allow somebody with this sort of track record to be confirmed.

And as my colleagues know, the majority leader has all the tools he needs at his disposal to have a vote on the Senate floor on this nomination. But it shouldn't be done by unanimous consent. It shouldn't be done outside of the public attention because there are so many things competing for people's attention. I think this is a debate and a conversation we need to have about powerful public officials abusing their power for partisan political gain.

What chance does the average American have if they will abuse that power to go after powerful public figures like a candidate for President or an incumbent President of the United States?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks before the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, our friends across the aisle are moving full steam ahead with what I think is fairly described as a reckless tax-and-spending spree, which is chock-full of unnecessary, unwarranted, and flatout unaffordable policies.

Remember that we had to spend a lot of money—borrowed money—during the COVID crisis, which we did on a bipartisan basis because it was a national—indeed, an international and global emergency.

But as we continue to get people vaccinated and put the pandemic in the rearview mirror, our colleagues simply want to continue spending money that we don't have to pursue their ideological and political agenda, to grow the government, to intrude more in people's lives, and to take more of what they earn rather than let them spend it as they see fit.

Our colleagues want to impose crippling tax hikes on job creators at a time when many of them are still digging out of the recession that was part of the pandemic. They want to dole out permanent welfare without requiring able-bodied men and women to work. They want to discourage medical innovation through price fixing and implement a range of items from their far-left wish list.

After charging nearly \$2 trillion on the taxpayers' credit card earlier this year, our Democratic colleagues are back at it for round 2. And this time, they are going all out. That is especially true when it comes to the energy sector.

Over the past few years, we have seen no shortage of unrealistic and down-right harmful policies to reduce carbon emissions. Now, there is a smart way to do it, and there is a self-defeating way to reduce emissions. One is to reduce the use of coal and increase the use of things like natural gas, which has much lower carbon content than coal. And we are doing that, and we have reduced emissions as a result.

But our colleagues have proposed everything from the socialist paradise that is the Green New Deal to more targeted but no more realistic net zero emission bills.

This reckless tax-and-spending spree compiles the most outlandish proposals into one of the greatest hits albums. The hallmark of this legislation is a full range of tax increases on the fossil fuel industry, which ultimately are passed along to consumers and contribute to inflation and the increased costs that they have to pay in order to fill up at the pump.

Whether we are talking about energy, agriculture, or any other industry, higher taxes always mean higher prices for consumers. It is inevitable.

Businesses can't just take the increases as a hit to their bottom line.

They might raise taxes, lay off employees, postpone expansion plans, or implement all of the above, but that is exactly what this proposal would spur when it comes to the energy sector.

It increases taxes already paid by energy companies on income earned in the global marketplace and subjects energy employers to double taxation of their foreign income. It also adds a brand new tax, the Superfund excise tax, which was eliminated 25 years ago—all in pursuit of more revenue to grow the size of the government.

Our friends across the aisle want to resurrect this tax and force energy companies to pay more on every barrel of crude oil that is sold. Once again, the ultimate burden won't be on those companies. It will fall to consumers who are already struggling to keep up with inflation.

Gasoline prices are up 42 percent over last year. Natural gas is up 21 percent. Families in Texas are paying more on everything from electricity to groceries, to vehicles. This smorgasbord of higher taxes will only drive up costs for working families and hurt the very job creators we have been trying to help, over the last year and a half, dig out from under COVID-19.

You have to wonder, if these policies are going to hurt working Americans and the economy, who benefits? Well, for starters, our geopolitical adversaries will benefit. The higher cost on domestic crude would, once again, make the U.S. reliant on imports of oil and gas from overseas, from countries like Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Venezuela perhaps.

President Biden unintentionally demonstrated the hypocrisy of this approach when he pushed, earlier this year, to beg OPEC, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, to increase production overseas to bring down oil prices here in the United States. In other words, he doesn't want American oil and gas producers to produce oil and gas. He wants the Russians and the Saudis to do it to help us bring down prices here in America.

It is just crazy. It makes no sense. If the President is worried about affordable energy, he needs to quit pushing policies that will drive up the cost for consumers at the pump.

Other big winners include wealthy electric vehicle drivers. The sort of subsidies that are contained in this proposed package includes a tax credit for electric vehicle purchases, even if these cars are made—you guessed it—in China. And it is subsidizing—it is taking middle-income taxpayers' money and giving it to people who are buying expensive cars because they are incentivized by the tax credit. Meanwhile, we have 280 million cars on the road in America that still depend on oil and gas in order to function because they have, yes, an internal combustion engine.

On top of that, a bigger tax credit is given to electric cars built in union shops. Now, why would you favor a political supporter like organized labor?

Well, I think the answer may be pretty obvious. Maybe union-built electric vehicles are more green than other electric vehicles or maybe it is a favor doled out to a special interest group by my friends on the other side, to a political constituency.

As a reminder, unlike gas-powered vehicle drivers, EV drivers don't even pay anything for the highways that they drive their car on. They don't pay into the highway trust fund, which comes out of the cost of a gallon of gas, to help maintain our roads and bridges.

So our friends across the aisle just keep on coming with tax breaks for the well-off and the well-to-do in a way that will burden hard-working Texans and Americans.

I support efforts to reduce carbon emissions to preserve our air, land, and water for future generations, but these efforts shouldn't pick winners and losers, especially when wealthy Americans are reaping the benefits at the cost of blue-collar workers.

Like the rest of the reckless tax-and-spending spree proposal, the cost of this energy proposal far exceeds any benefit. It will drive up costs for American families, hurt our global competitiveness, ultimately hurt our allies that depend on exported LNG to provide energy diversity, and it will empower our adversaries.

So there is no reason to stick taxpayers with the bill for these unnecessary policies when there are better ways to keep costs for consumers low while protecting our environment.

I yield the floor.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I yield back our remaining time.

VOTE ON MOTION TO DISCHARGE

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Ms. SMITH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent; the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 369 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Duckworth	Leahy
Bennet	Durbin	Luján
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Manchin
Booker	Hassan	Markey
Brown	Heinrich	Menendez
Cantwell	Hickenlooper	Merkley
Cardin	Hirono	Murphy
Carper	Kaine	Murray
Casey	Kelly	Ossoff
Coons	King	Padilla
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Peters

Reed	Sinema	Warnock
Rosen	Smith	Warren
Sanders	Stabenow	Whitehouse
Schatz	Tester	Wyden
Schumer	Van Hollen	
Shaheen	Warner	

NAYS—48

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Collins	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Burr	Feinstein	Rounds
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The motion to discharge is agreed to, and the nomination is placed on the calendar.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 244.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sarah Bianchi, of Virginia, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative (Asia, Africa, Investment, Services, Textiles, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the rank of Ambassador.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 244, Sarah Bianchi, of Virginia, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative (Asia, Africa, Investment, Services, Textiles, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the rank of Ambassador.

Charles E. Schumer, Mazie Hirono, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Martin Heinrich, Michael F. Bennet, Jacky

Rosen, Richard Blumenthal, Alex Padilla, John Hickenlooper, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tina Smith, Tim Kaine, Ben Ray Lujan, Chris Van Hollen, Jeff Merkley.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 241.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 241, Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs).

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 333.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Karen Erika Donfried, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European Affairs and Eurasian Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 333, Karen Erika Donfried, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European Affairs and Eurasian Affairs).

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 324.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Monica P. Medina, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 324, Monica

P. Medina, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 331.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mary Catherine Phee, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (African Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 331, Mary Catherine Phee, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (African Affairs).

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 240.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Todd D. Robinson, of New Jersey, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 240, Todd D. Robinson, of New Jersey, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs).

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 334.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jessica Lewis, of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented

under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 334, Jessica Lewis, of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs).

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, September 21, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I would have voted no on the confirmation of Veronica S. Rossman to be a United States Circuit judge for the Tenth Circuit.

HONORING SSG RYAN KNAUSS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, it is my honor to pay tribute today to a fellow Tennessean who made the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

On August 26, 2021, at approximately 9:30 am Eastern Standard Time, an ISIS-K terrorist murdered 13 American servicemembers in a suicide attack on the Abbey Gate leading into Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Among the fallen was Corryton native SSG Ryan Knauss. Ryan served with the Army's 9th Battalion, 8th Psychological Operations Group (Airborne), which put him directly in the heart of Afghan communities. His job was to build relationships with the people he met there, and by all accounts, he succeeded with uncommon skill, empathy, and compassion. It was dangerous work, but Ryan understood its importance. As his widow Alena recently told a Knoxville newspaper, "When he spoke of the people of Afghanistan, all he saw were people that

needed help. They were below no one in his eyes, not even Americans. He told me that all he saw were people of a different culture who deserved to be OK."

When the time came for the Army to support evacuations at the airport, Ryan volunteered for the mission. He knew that, by doing this, he would be putting himself in danger; but when he looked at the chaos unfolding there, all he saw were the thousands of women and children forced into the line of fire by the persistent, terrifying evil that was seizing control of Kabul.

And so he went and faithfully executed his duty. He was born to be a soldier and died as the finest example of American heroism anyone could ask for. He was a loving husband, a loyal friend, and a light in the darkness. Ryan's unit, Detachment 10, offered a statement following his death that I believe deserves a place in the RECORD. They said, "Ryan knew the dangerous situation he was going to, but protecting innocent civilians is one of the values that drove him. It has been said that life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives, and Ryan had an incredible impact on his family and friends. And thanks to his actions, thousands of children will have the joy of knowing a childhood free from danger and oppression."

Ryan, we are in awe of you. Thank you for your service to this country and for your sacrifice on behalf of all those who seek refuge within the common cause of freedom.

(At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CUSTER COUNTY SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER

• Mr. ROUNDS. Madam President, today I rise to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Custer County Senior Citizen Center in Custer, SD. The Custer County Senior Citizen Center has continually been a place of resource, entertainment, recreation, and community for the venerable elder citizenry of the Custer Community and southern Black Hills since 1971; the 50 years of success the Custer Senior Center has enjoyed is fully supported by the hundreds of volunteers who have donated thousands of hours every year for five decades to help the senior center thrive and grow into the valuable community resource it has become.

The Custer County Senior Center provides unlimited opportunities for growth, prosperity, increased longevity, and improved quality of life to our valuable senior citizens by providing educational, cultural, financial, medical, intellectual, and fitness programs throughout the year.

The Custer County Senior Center will continue into the next 50 years providing unparalleled service to the golden age population of Custer County, the Black Hills, and the State of South Dakota as it has done since its incep-

tion, with the support of the community, the members, the volunteers, and the dedicated staff at the center.●

TRIBUTE TO PAUL M. MATULIC

Mr. BURR. Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to Paul Matulic, a dedicated member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence staff for over 16 years. Paul's total service to the U.S. Senate spans 27 years, the first 11 of which were spent as foreign policy adviser to Senator Orrin Hatch. Since joining the staff in 2005, Paul has been resolute and unwavering in his commitment to the committee's oversight mandate. He has managed an array of critical responsibilities ranging from oversight of intelligence community covert action programs and regional monitoring of America's national security hotspots and warzones, to making key contributions in support of the committee's most sensitive and high-profile investigative work. Paul never got anything but difficult assignments because I trusted him and I knew he would do an excellent job.

Through it all, Paul maintained an erudite and exemplary professionalism that bettered both his colleagues in the performance of their oversight work and the intelligence professionals who he oversaw. Paul was exacting as an overseer, but he always balanced his demanding expectations with a heartfelt, genuine admiration for the extraordinary men and women of the intelligence community he helped oversee. Paul enjoyed relationships of trust and respect with his colleagues and members of the committee alike because he was thorough, he was prepared, and above all, Paul always gave you the truth, whether you wanted to hear it or not.

Before coming to work for the Senate in 1994, Paul served as the vice president of Hill & Knowlton, a global public relations consultancy in New York City. Prior to that, Paul spent several years as an editorial and research assistant in the office of former President Nixon. Paul earned a master's degree in international affairs and political economy from Columbia University, and a bachelor of science in international affairs from St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY. Prior to college, Paul experienced life at its grandest and grittiest, working from one side of the North American continent to the other, all the way into the Yukon Territory, spending time as a gravedigger, a magician, a ranch hand, a construction worker, a janitor, and a bartender.

Paul's work for the committee, by its very nature, defies elaboration in this public forum. It is enough to say that Paul approached every day in the office with one ideal in mind: Democracy is underwritten by a vigorous system of checks and balances and that accountability is all the more necessary when it is applied to intelligence activities that might otherwise escape public

scrutiny. The pride and purpose Paul took from being a part of that oversight mechanism were evident in the seriousness with which he approached his work. I am personally grateful to Paul for everything he did on the committee's behalf.

Paul plans to spend his retirement with Margo, the great love of his life, at his side. He intends to travel, read, and walk the woods of the Rock Creek Park where he has found so much comfort and solace over the years. The son of European immigrants, who emigrated himself from Canada when he was 4 years old, Paul's story is a distinctly American one. Everyone who got to play a role in it these past 16 years is better for it.

It gives me great joy to publicly thank Paul for his contributions to the work of the committee, the integrity of congressional oversight, and the security of this great Nation. He has been a credit to what we do from the moment he joined the staff.

Congratulations and best of luck to you in retirement, Paul. Neither your expertise, your good humor, nor your wise counsel will soon be replaced.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF JON SIMPSON

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Bentonville Police Chief Jon Simpson whose dedication to law enforcement and community service will be deeply missed following his retirement as chief of the Bentonville Police Department.

Chief Simpson's dedication is grounded in his strong roots to northwest Arkansas as a Bentonville native and graduate of the University of Arkansas. He established a career in public safety, first in the security division of Walmart Stores, Inc., before transitioning to work for the city as a patrol officer in 1994, where his service quickly stood out. After only 2 years with the Bentonville Police Department, Jon was named officer of the year.

From there, the chief held numerous supervisory positions and led by example, inspiring officers in both the patrol and criminal divisions. He was promoted to a command staff member in 2006 and, in 2011, was appointed chief of the Bentonville Police Department. In these leadership roles, Chief Simpson reorganized the rank structure of the department, added personnel with further opportunities for advisory positions, and upgraded the department's vehicles and equipment. Additionally, he led an extensive renovation to the police department building that added a bomb squad facility, emergency communication center, criminal investigations building, and emergency operations center.

The Bentonville community's rapid growth and unique challenges certainly shaped Chief Simpson's tenure. He recognized

the high expectations of Bentonville citizens and was encouraged to do more to ensure his officers lived up to those standards. That approach led to the incredible level of safety and security within the Bentonville community today. Chief Simpson's impact has also been recognized beyond his own department. Recently, the Arkansas Fraternal Order of Police in Little Rock recognized him with its Outstanding Police Chief Award.

Chief Simpson has demonstrated a relentless pursuit to improve himself, his team, and the community he served throughout his career. I applaud his dedicated, decades-long commitment to law enforcement and the safety of his fellow Arkansans. He is a true public servant who has strengthened law and order in Bentonville. It has been an honor to work with him during his tenure, and I wish him all the best in his next endeavor.●

TRIBUTE TO BRENDAN O'NEILL

• Mr. COONS. Madam President, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant of the First State, an attorney, community leader, and friend to many, who this summer concludes a distinguished legal career of more than 45 years.

Attorney Brendan O'Neill of Wilmington, DE, wore many hats during his career: county and Federal prosecutor, a criminal defense lawyer in private practice, and chief public defender.

Delaware is known as a State of neighbors, and when it comes to Brendan O'Neill, there is no better neighbor. Brendan was, for a decade, my actual next-door neighbor, and we even studied and took the Delaware bar exam together in 1992.

Looking back on his long legal career, Brendan reminded his wife, Liz O'Neill, about all of the positions he has held over the years.

"I've had a very interesting professional life. It's been a lot of fun," Brendan said, adding as he often does, jokingly, "I've done everything but make money."

Brendan has had a truly remarkable run. Before I offer some sentiments and well wishes from family and friends, it is only appropriate to chronicle his career.

After graduating from the UC Davis School of Law in 1975, Brendan became a prosecutor in the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, transitioning later to a Federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office there.

Following those early years, Brendan started a criminal defense practice, O'Neill and Young, in Santa Monica, which overlooked beautiful Palisades Park and the iconic beach on Ocean Avenue. That practice, cofounded with his college friend, Wayne Young, operated from 1979 to 1993.

It was then, Liz said, that Brendan was "deported from California" to

Delaware, where he landed a position as a lawyer in the civil division of the Delaware Department of Justice.

In 1995, Brendan launched what would become a 26-year career in the Delaware Public Defender's Office. In May 2009, Governor Jack Markell tapped Brendan to be the chief public defender, a position of trust he fulfilled for 12 years.

"Brendan O'Neill was a fierce advocate for his clients and a key proponent for the right of all accused to have a competent defense," former Governor Markell said. "His was one of the most important nominations I ever made, and I'm not the least bit surprised he is widely recognized as having been a highly effective public defender. Delaware is better for his service, and I am proud to be associated with this intelligent, joyful, passionate, and competent leader. I have no doubt he will continue to be a widely respected member of the Delaware community in retirement."

During his 12 years as Delaware's chief public defender, Brendan and his team overhauled the system for providing indigent criminal defense by creating the office of defense services, or ODS, which now includes the public defender's office and the office of conflicts counsel.

Brendan implemented the practice of vertical representation statewide in all courts. Attorneys with ODS successfully challenged the constitutionality of Delaware's death penalty statute. He acquired additional office space for ODS's Kent County and Sussex County practices and increased the focus on holistic defense to address clients' ongoing needs and issues.

On top of those accomplishments, ODS was voted as one of the best workplaces in Delaware for 10 consecutive years.

Being a public defender is not an easy job. People outside of the legal profession often asked Brendan how he could represent folks who allegedly committed terrible crimes. Liz said that she was often curious about that herself, knowing the nature of his responsibility.

Brendan generally responded, Liz said, by reminding folks that public defenders represent people who were accused of crimes and that the American legal system was founded on the presumption of innocence. Brendan often made the analogy that we don't want doctors who chastise us about how we got our medical condition. We want doctors who listen to us and help us with our problems.

The same goes for lawyers. We want them to fight for us, Brendan said, and help us get the best possible outcome. He often has held that there is no greater pressure than representing an innocent person. As a defense attorney, the facts are often not on your side, so you do the best you can to put on your case.

Brendan's career is full of people he has helped in very stressful situations,

facing potential consequences from losing their license, their freedom, or their life. His clients benefited from his nonjudgmental nature, generous heart, good humor, practical approach, understanding, and kindness.

"I can only count on one hand, the times when he couldn't see the good in his client," Liz said. "In those cases, he always fought for someone close to them, a mother, wife, son, or daughter."

Despite the odds and the outcomes, Liz said, Brendan was consistently supportive of his clients, sometimes even providing them with practical things like Liz's favorite pair of sweatpants, which happened to be in the backseat of his car.

He was a constant source of encouragement and positivity to many Delawareans, whether it was the father saying goodbye to his teenage son found guilty or the girlfriend of a drug dealer starting anew in the witness protection program. Brendan often stayed in touch with the family and friends of his clients long after the verdict came down.

Brendan always fought hard for his clients, giving them and their loved ones his best shot. The courtroom was theater to Brendan, and he thrived on being prepared and at the top of his game.

"I remember many nights listening to a closing argument at the dining room table with a cardboard box as a podium and charts taped to the walls as he practiced his speech," Liz fondly remembered.

Brendan is a person who respects everyone's role in the court system. He often would go out of his way to get to know the people who made it happen, including the bailiffs, court reporters, clerks, judges, and the "other side," depending on his role as a prosecutor or a defense attorney.

Many Delawareans don't know that Brendan had a thriving pro-bono practice over the years. He counseled countless teens, young adults, and their parents about legal problems, things such as DUIs, disorderly conduct, speeding tickets, etc. He was there to provide nonjudgmental guidance for legal issues and emotional support.

Along with his pro-bono effort, Brendan volunteered innumerable hours over the years as a board member for organizations such as the Central YMCA, Catholic Charities, Salesianum School—and his current role as the chair of Autism Delaware, an organization close to his heart.

Brendan is a person who embraces new beginnings. He looks forward in times of uncertainty, disappointment, success, and happiness and encourages others to do the same. There are so many examples, but the biggest one is leaving his California-based law practice, taking and passing the Delaware bar after 17 years of already being an attorney, and starting anew in Delaware.

Besides all of the volunteer work and his impressive career as our top public defender, Brendan's hallmark is serving his clients, coworkers, friends, and family well. His five children—Brendan, Eamon, Brian, Claire, and Rainey—are paramount in his mind and life.

If you are on his team, he is in your corner. Claire O'Neill Peabody, who interned at the public defender's office for a summer, wasn't exactly sure what her dad did there other than being the chief cheerleader, making the rounds every day, stopping by offices telling people what a great job they were doing. He is known for motivating both his employees and his family with famous one-liners and other inspiring words.

"Dad has a phrase, saying, or one-liner for just about every situation life can throw at you," Claire said. "One of his many mantras is 'Next play!'"

That one-liner, in particular, is one that he says to his kids all the time. "While explaining it takes away from the one-liner magic," Claire said, "I am pretty sure he wants us to take what we've learned from a previous experience but focus on the next thing in front of you."

Her dad's own "next play" will include a lot of play: golf and tennis, two of his favorite activities. "He's earned it," Claire said. "So good luck on your next play, Duner! Hit em straight!"

Eamon O'Neill said one of his favorite things about his father is the ability to relish in the simple joys of life while they are happening. His dad does not need to lose something to appreciate it; he enjoys what he has while he has it.

"For as long as I can remember, he has encouraged me to do the same," Eamon said. "Often, this happened as we were driving to one of the thousands of soccer practices my dad selflessly took me to over the years. As we were getting close to the field, he would remind me of how great and how much fun practice is and how lucky I was to be playing a game I loved with my friends."

This lesson did not always stick with Eamon as a teenager, but he thinks about it often as an adult. "The ability to be present and grateful and enthusiastic during the small and routine moments of life," Eamon continued, "is something I love about dad and try to emulate every day."

Brian O'Neill, who plays offensive tackle for the Minnesota Vikings, said, "play hard, have fun" is one of his dad's most famous quotes. "He has said this to us a few thousand times over the years. The message is simple—give your best and have fun while doing it."

Brian said that his father has lived and exemplified that quote every day of his professional and personal life. "I know he gave his best—to his cases, clients, coworkers, and colleagues," Brian said. "I know damn well he also had so much fun along the ride. He always says if you love what you do,

you'll never work a day in your life. If I can have half the fun he did in my career—I know I'll have a chance!"

My family had the opportunity to get to know the O'Neills well. They lived next to us when we were in the Triangle Neighborhood in Wilmington. There was a fence between our yards, and we took that fence down; we were one big family.

Brendan is truly the salt of the earth. He is smart, loyal, and kind. He is funny and always makes everyone in the room feel welcome.

"You want Brendan on your team," my wife Annie said. "He takes everything in stride; he sticks by you. We love him, and he and his family fill our cup and our hearts!"

For me, Brendan epitomizes what it means to be a good attorney, a good father, and a good friend—really the best of Delaware, an immeasurably decent and kind person.

Along with so many in our State, Annie and I wish him and his family the best in retirement. To Brendan, as the old Irish blessing goes: "May good luck be your friend in whatever you do and may trouble be always a stranger to you."

For your extraordinary dedication to advancing justice in the State of Delaware, for all of the people whose lives you have positively impacted, and for the decades of service and sacrifice: Thank you.●

PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

On request by Senator TOMMY TUBERVILLE, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security: Leona M. Bridges, of California, to be a Member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring October 11, 2023, vice William S. Jasien, term expired.

On request by Senator TOMMY TUBERVILLE, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security: Javier E. Saade, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring October 11, 2022, vice David Avren Jones, term expired.

On request by Senator TOMMY TUBERVILLE, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security: Stacie Olivares, of California, to be a Member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring September 25, 2024, vice Ronald David McCray, term expired.

On request by Senator TOMMY TUBERVILLE, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security: Dana Katherine Bilyeu, of Nevada, to be a

Member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a re-appointment term expiring October 11, 2023.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:14 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 189. An act to increase, effective as of December 1, 2021, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1281. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Gaylord, Michigan, as the "Navy Corpsman Steve Andrews Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Clinic".

H.R. 3475. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Columbus, Georgia, as the "Robert S. Poydasheff VA Clinic".

H.R. 4172. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Aurora, Colorado, as the "Lieutenant Colonel John W. Mosley VA Clinic".

H.R. 5293. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend and modify certain authorities and requirements relating to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 4:31 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 272. An act to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to require the budget justifications and appropriation requests of agencies be made publicly available.

S. 325. An act to amend the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act to extend the deadline for a report by the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1281. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Gaylord, Michigan, as the "Navy Corpsman Steve Andrews Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3475. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Columbus, Georgia, as the "Robert S. Poydasheff VA Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 4172. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Aurora, Colorado, as the "Lieutenant Colonel John W. Mosley VA Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2765. A bill to provide that Members of Congress may not receive pay after October 1 of any fiscal year in which Congress has not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget and passed the regular appropriations bills.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

S. 2788. A bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program.

S. 2789. A bill making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today September 21, 2021, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 272. An act to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to require the budget justifications and appropriation requests of agencies be made publicly available.

S. 325. An act to amend the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act to extend the deadline for a report by the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1981. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Definitions of the European Union and the United Kingdom" (Docket No. APHIS-2021-0003) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1982. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2020 annual report of the Farm Credit Administration Regulator of the Farm Credit System; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1983. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "C10-C18-Alkyl dimethyl amine oxides (ADAOs); Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8678-01-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1984. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Chlorpyrifos; Tolerance Revocations" (FRL No. 5993-04-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1985. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oxirane, 2-methyl-, polymer with oxirane, mono-(9Z)-9-octadecanoate, methyl ether; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8745-02-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1986. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Thiabendazole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 8750-02-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1987. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "a-Alkyl-w-hydroxypoly(oxypropylene) and/or poly(oxyethylene) polymers where the alkyl chain contains a minimum of 6 carbons; Exemptions from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8799-01-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1988. A communication from the Director of the Regulations Management Division, Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "The American Rescue Plan Act Emergency Rural Health Care Grant Program" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1989. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Leopoldo A. Quintas, Jr., United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1990. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Ricky L. Waddell, Jr., United States Army Reserve, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1991. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on

the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Mark C. Schwartz, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1992. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of nine (12) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1993. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of nine (9) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1994. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1995. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 14014 with respect to Burma; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1996. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13848 with respect to the threat of foreign interference in United States elections; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1997. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13566 with respect to Libya; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1998. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13224 with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1999. A message from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order declaring additional steps to be taken concerning the national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States posed by specified harmful foreign activities of the Government of the Russian Federation declared in Executive Order 14024 of April 15, 2021; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2000. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Seven-Day-After report for the Emergency Security Supplemental Act, 2021 (Public Law 117-31); to the Committee on the Budget.

EC-2001. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Office of General Counsel, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Procedures for the Issuance of Guidance Documents" (RIN1990-AA50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2002. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Legislation,

Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Evaporatively-Cooled Commercial Package Air Conditioners and Water-Cooled Commercial Package Air Conditioners" ((RIN1904-AE07) (10 CFR Parts 431)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2003. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Test Procedure for Dedicated-Purpose Pool Pump Motors" ((RIN1904-AE38) (10 CFR Parts 431)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2004. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards and Test Procedures for Ceiling Fans" ((RIN1904-AD88) (10 CFR Parts 430)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mrs. MURRAY, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1543. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide best practices on student suicide awareness and prevention training and condition State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and tribal educational agencies receiving funds under section 520A of such Act to establish and implement a school-based student suicide awareness and prevention training policy.

S. 2425. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to ensure the provision of high-quality service through the Suicide Prevention Lifeline, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. OSSOFF):

S. 2766. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a manufacturing investment tax credit and a production tax credit for manufacturing facilities that produce offshore wind turbine components; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 2767. A bill to authorize certain Federal departments to enter into contracts to carry out existing authorities to protect United States facilities from unmanned aircraft; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. 2768. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a special rule for certain casualty losses of uncut timber; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 2769. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 2770. A bill to require the Secretary of State to designate the Taliban as a foreign terrorist organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2771. A bill to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Angelo, Texas, as the "Colonel Charles and JoAnne Powell Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 2772. A bill to provide Federal support to entities performing reviews of wrongful convictions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2773. A bill to amend the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to address satellite offices of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2774. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to address patent ownership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2775. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to provide for whistleblower incentives and protection; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SANDERS, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2776. A bill to clarify that the Secretary of Health and Human Services has authority to implement a residential eviction moratorium under the quarantine authority vested by the Public Health Service Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. SUL-LIVAN):

S. 2777. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make adjustments to payment rates for skilled nursing facilities under the Medicare program to account for certain unique circumstances; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 2778. A bill to amend title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for teacher, principal, and other school leader quality enhancement; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2779. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of a Task Force on Maternal Mental Health, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2780. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to prohibit certain adverse personnel actions taken against members of the Armed Forces based on declining the COVID-19 vaccine; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself and Mr. SASSE):

S. 2781. A bill to repeal the exception to sanctions with respect to the energy, shipping, and shipbuilding sectors of Iran relating to reconstruction assistance for Afghanistan; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Mr. PAUL):

S. 2782. A bill to address recommendations made to Congress by the Government Accountability Office and detailed in the annual duplication report, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MERKLEY:

S. 2783. A bill to provide resettlement benefits for certain nationals of Afghanistan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 2784. A bill to amend title 46 to establish a grant program for developing, offering, or improving educational or career training programs for American workers related to the maritime workforce; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2785. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for gender transition in minors; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2786. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to address the inappropriate or unlawful denial by the Department of Veterans Affairs of benefits and services for former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged or released from the active military, naval, or air service under conditions characterized as neither dishonorable nor honorable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 2787. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of doctors of podiatric medicine in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2788. A bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program; read the first time.

By Mr. SHELBY (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. 2789. A bill making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. HAGERTY (for himself, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 2790. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CASEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 372. A resolution designating the week beginning September 13, 2021, as "National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 373. A resolution marking the 4-year anniversary of the devastation of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands by Hurricane Maria; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. KING, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 374. A resolution designating the week of September 19 through September 25, 2021, as "National Estuaries Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. Res. 375. A resolution supporting efforts to strengthen protection, assistance, and solutions for Venezuelan women and children; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself, Mr. WARNOCK, and Mr. BRAUN):

S. Res. 376. A resolution designating the week of September 19 through September 25, 2021, as "Gold Star Families Remembrance Week"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to require coverage of hearing devices and systems in certain private health insurance plans, and for other purposes.

S. 403

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 403, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects, and for other purposes.

S. 450

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 450, a bill to award posthumously the Congressional Gold Medal to Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley.

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 450, *supra*.

S. 558

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 558, a bill to establish a national integrated flood information system within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 692

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 692, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the female telephone operators of the Army Signal Corps, known as the "Hello Girls".

S. 773

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 773, a bill to enable certain hospitals that were participating in or applied for the drug discount program under section 340B of the Public Health Service Act prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency to temporarily maintain eligibility for such program, and for other purposes.

S. 844

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 844, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 868

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 868, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the five-month waiting period for disability insurance benefits under such title and waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals with Huntington's disease.

S. 1068

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1068, a bill to direct the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue an occupational safety and health standard to protect workers from heat-related injuries and illnesses.

S. 1106

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1106, a bill to prohibit the sale of shark fins, and for other purposes.

S. 1175

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1175, a bill to categorize public safety telecommunications as a protective service occupation under the Standard Occupational Classification System.

S. 1328

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1328, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to reauthorize the farm to school program, and for other purposes.

S. 1435

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1435, a bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to prohibit product hopping, and for other purposes.

S. 1536

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1536, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the availability of medical nutrition therapy services under the Medicare program.

S. 1568

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1568, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide a waiver of the cap on annual payments for nursing and allied health education payments.

S. 1628

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1628, a bill to amend the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 to strengthen protections relating to the online collection, use, and disclosure of personal information of children and minors, and for other purposes.

S. 1692

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1692, a bill to provide better care and outcomes for Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their caregivers, while accelerating progress toward prevention strategies, disease modifying treatments, and, ultimately, a cure.

S. 1780

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr.

MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1780, a bill to remove college cost as a barrier to every student having access to a well-prepared and diverse educator workforce, and for other purposes.

S. 1782

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1782, a bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a grant program to facilitate tree planting that reduces residential energy consumption, and for other purposes.

S. 1810

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1810, a bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities, and for other purposes.

S. 1848

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1848, a bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and marital status in the administration and provision of child welfare services, to improve safety, well-being, and permanency for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning foster youth, and for other purposes.

S. 1872

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) were added as cosponsors of S. 1872, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II in recognition of their extraordinary service during World War II.

S. 1873

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1873, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection screening tests.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reform re-

quirements with respect to direct and indirect remuneration under Medicare part D, and for other purposes.

S. 1976

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1976, a bill to establish a program to oversee the global COVID-19 response and prepare for future pandemics, and for other purposes.

S. 1987

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1987, a bill to authorize the imposition of sanctions with respect to the deliberate concealment or distortion of information about public health emergencies of international concern, and for other purposes.

S. 2291

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) were added as cosponsors of S. 2291, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a tax credit for production of electricity using nuclear power.

S. 2384

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2384, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the semiquincentennial anniversary of the establishment of the United States.

S. 2434

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2434, a bill to provide tax incentives that support local newspapers and other local media, and for other purposes.

S. 2493

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2493, a bill to extend the deadline for eligible health care providers to use certain funds received from the COVID-19 Provider Relief Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 2562

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 2562, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve extended care services by providing Medicare beneficiaries with an option for cost effective home-based extended care under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2580

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2580, a bill to direct

the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to make free National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes available to members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

S. 2672

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2672, a bill to authorize the Department of Housing and Urban Development to transform neighborhoods of extreme poverty into sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods with access to economic opportunities, by revitalizing severely distressed housing, and investing and leveraging investments in well-functioning services, educational opportunities, public assets, public transportation, and improved access to jobs, and for other purposes.

S. 2675

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2675, a bill to amend the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to increase appropriations to Restaurant Revitalization Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 2676

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2676, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of physical therapists in the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2736

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2736, a bill to exclude vehicles to be used solely for competition from certain provisions of the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2744

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2744, a bill to clarify the meaning of the term "emergency war funding" for purposes of determining eligible costs for such funding, and for other purposes.

S. 2752

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2752, a bill to amend the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 to protect civil rights and otherwise prevent meaningful harm to third parties, and for other purposes.

S. 2760

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2760, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

S. CON. RES. 9

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 9, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 338

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 338, a resolution designating September 2021 as National Democracy Month as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

S. RES. 359

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 359, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of State should designate the Afghan Taliban as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, freeze all assets of the Government of Afghanistan held in the United States, and use all authority and influence of the United States Government to prohibit the distribution of funds to the Afghan Taliban by other countries and international institutions and organizations.

S. RES. 367

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 367, a resolution designating September 2021 as "National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month".

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2771. A bill to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Angelo, Texas, as the "Colonel Charles and JoAnne Powell Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print my bill for introduction in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The bill's purpose is to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Angelo, Texas, as the "Colonel Charles and JoAnne Powell Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic".

S. 2771

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Colonel Charles Powell and his wife, Mrs. JoAnne Powell, served the community of San Angelo, Texas, with character and dignity.

(2) Colonel Powell served as the base commander of Goodfellow Air Force Base from 1980 to 1984.

(3) When the Powells moved to San Angelo, Charles was ordered to help Goodfellow avoid closure and the displacement of many members of the Armed Forces from the community they had grown to love.

(4) The impact of Charles' career can still be felt today at Goodfellow Air Force Base, as it serves as a training school for thousands of members from every Armed Force to train in cryptology, intelligence, and firefighting.

(5) JoAnne assisted thousands of constituents in the district offices of Representatives Tom Loeffler, Lamar Smith, K. Michael Conaway, and August Pfluger.

(6) One of the several duties JoAnne spearheaded was the annual process of nominations to the military service academies, which was always a year-round process for her.

(7) With JoAnne's assistance, many of the young men and women of the 11th congressional district of Texas went on to serve the United States and attend one of the military service academies.

(8) In addition, JoAnne was a fierce advocate of veterans and helped thousands of individuals gain access to the veterans benefits they rightfully earned.

(9) JoAnne's compassion and dedication helped make the Concho Valley a better place.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN SAN ANGELO, TEXAS.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Angelo, Texas, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Colonel Charles and JoAnne Powell Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic" or the "Colonel Charles and JoAnne Powell VA Clinic".

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the community-based outpatient clinic referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Colonel Charles and JoAnne Powell Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2773. A bill to amend the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to address satellite offices of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, innovation is the lifeblood of the American economy. Thanks to our Founders, our Constitution anticipated the power of innovation and enshrined the basic idea that inventors should be given the incentive to do what they do best. The intellectual property clause has pushed the United States to be the long-standing global leader in innovation. Unfortunately, like too many other aspects of our society, the benefits of our innovation ecosystem have not been equally felt by Americans from all backgrounds. Today, I am proud to introduce the bipartisan Unleashing American Innovators Act, legislation that will make the patent system more accessible to Americans from all backgrounds and ensure that we do more to harness the untapped potential that exists in our country.

The Unleashing American Innovators Act builds on a legacy of broadening access to the patent system that I am particularly proud of. Ten years ago last week, Congress passed the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act, which was the most significant update to our patent laws in nearly sixty years. Under the Leahy-Smith Act, we created a network of U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) satellite offices around the country, bringing the PTO closer to where Americans actually innovate. We lowered fees for small businesses and created a new micro-entity status to lower fees even further. We also created a Patent Pro Bono program to help make legal resources more accessible to prospective inventors.

Now is the time to build on that success. The Unleashing American Innovators Act will further boost access to the patent system for underrepresented groups by explicitly directing existing PTO satellite offices to reach out to those who are underrepresented in patent filings. A recent PTO study found that only twenty-two percent of U.S. patents list a woman as an inventor, even though women make up more than fifty percent of our population. Other studies have found that African Americans apply for patents at about half the rate of white Americans. We need to boost participation from inventors in rural areas like Vermont as well. Congress must do more to ensure that these and other underrepresented groups have the opportunity to participate in the system.

This bill will go further than our efforts ten years ago by requiring the PTO to study whether additional satellite offices are needed to increase participation in the system by women, people of color, military veterans, individual inventors, and any other groups that are currently underrepresented. It will also create a network of smaller community outreach offices, which will do the hard work of meeting prospective innovators where they live. These offices will partner with local community organizations to create community-based programs to educate Americans about the patent system and the benefits of innovation and entrepreneurship. One such office will be located in northern New England so that it can help provide assistance to inventors in Vermont.

The Unleashing American Innovators Act will also establish a patentability assessment pilot program to assist first-time prospective inventors in determining whether an idea they have is likely to meet the threshold for patentability. It will give the PTO study the efficacy of the Patent Pro Bono Program to ensure that it is meeting the needs of underrepresented groups. Finally, it will further reduce application fees for small businesses and micro entities to reduce the costs of obtaining a patent.

By building on the structures we put in place in the Leahy-Smith Act ten years ago, we can ensure that the next generation of innovators in America reflect the full potential of our greatest natural resource—the genius of the American people. I am proud to partner with Senator TILLIS on this important piece of legislation. Expanding access to the patent system is not a partisan issue; it is an issue of maintaining American competitiveness and extending opportunity to all Americans, no matter their background, economic status, or location. I urge the Senate to act swiftly to pass this bill.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2774. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to address patent ownership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President. One of the fundamental underpinning of the patent system is transparency. In exchange for obtaining limited exclusive rights over their inventions, inventors disclose those inventions to the public, making transparent something that might otherwise remain secret. This transparency has tremendous benefits for our society by accelerating innovation, and the patent system as a whole helps to drive our economy. I have fought for many years to bring even more transparency into the patent system to further benefit the public, particularly by pushing for public disclosure of who actually owns a patent.

I am proud today to continue my partnership with Senator TILLIS on intellectual property issues by intro-

ducing the bipartisan Pride in Patent Ownership Act, which requires patent owners to disclose their true identity when a patent is issued and when it is sold. I have long supported efforts in the Senate to achieve this goal and am excited to spearhead this effort now.

The American people—any of whom may be charged with infringing a given patent—have a right to know who owns a patent, which often changes hands after being issued to the initial inventor. Currently, to know who owns a patent, you have to engage in costly, time-consuming litigation to uncover that information. That simply shouldn't be the case. This bill helps to ensure a fair innovation system for small businesses, non-profits, and independent entrepreneurs who lack the resources to engage in costly litigation just to discover who possesses exclusive patent rights over a particular invention.

Transparency in patent ownership will also help us better understand how we are doing in the global competition for innovation. Currently, a whopping 52% of U.S. patents are issued to foreign applicants. But there is no systematic way to track ownership of U.S. patents, including when patents are sold to foreign entities. And Chinese companies like Huawei—which often serve as proxies for the Chinese Communist Party—are wielding patent portfolios of unknown size and scope in the United States.

Although we do not know what specific patents Huawei owns, in the last two years, it claims to have received an estimated \$1.2 to \$1.3 billion in patent licensing fees, and it is likely that most of those licensing fees come from Americans, based on U.S. patents. Furthermore, Huawei's patents cover fundamental technologies that will power our global future, such as the 5G mobile network. Its dominance over these cutting-edge technologies unquestionably advantages China and disadvantages America. It is imperative, both for our innovation economy and national security, to know who owns what patents and who is profiting.

Senator TILLIS and I feel strongly about transparency in patent ownership. We initially proposed this bill as an amendment to the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act earlier this Congress, and it was cleared by the Chair and Ranking Member of the full Judiciary Committee for inclusion in that bill's manager's package that ultimately failed. We have since received feedback from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, whose input we have worked hard to incorporate. As Chairman of the Senate's Intellectual Property Subcommittee, I will continue to utilize all of our Subcommittee's tools along with Ranking Member TILLIS to improve transparency around patent ownership. This bill is an essential next step in that process, and I urge the Senate to act swiftly to pass it.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 372—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, AS “NATIONAL HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS WEEK”

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CASEY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 372

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions are degree-granting institutions that have a full-time equivalent undergraduate enrollment of at least 25 percent Hispanic students;

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions play an important role in educating many underserved students and helping those students attain their full potential by creating opportunities and increasing access to higher education;

Whereas 569 Hispanic-Serving Institutions operate in the United States;

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions represent 17 percent of all nonprofit institutions of higher education, yet serve 27.9 percent of all students and 67 percent of all Hispanic students, enrolling 2,340,000 Hispanic students;

Whereas the number of “emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions”, defined as institutions that do not yet meet the threshold of 25 percent Hispanic full-time equivalent enrollment but serve a Hispanic student population of between 15 and 24.9 percent, stands at 362 institutions operating in 38 States and Puerto Rico;

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions are located in 28 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico;

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions are actively involved in empowering and improving the communities in which the institutions are located.

Whereas 9 of the top 10 colleges and universities ranked by the Social Mobility Index are Hispanic-Serving Institutions;

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions are leading efforts to increase Hispanic participation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (commonly referred to as “STEM”);

Whereas Hispanic-Serving Institutions are engines of economic mobility and a major contributor to the economic prosperity of the United States;

Whereas, of the institutions of higher education ranked by Opportunity Insights based on the economic mobility of the graduates of those institutions, 6 of the top 10 institutions, including the top-ranked institution, are Hispanic-Serving Institutions;

Whereas celebrating the vast contributions of Hispanic-Serving Institutions to the United States strengthens the culture of the United States; and

Whereas the achievements and goals of Hispanic-Serving Institutions deserve national recognition: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the achievements and goals of Hispanic-Serving Institutions across the United States and in Puerto Rico;

(2) designates the week beginning September 13, 2021, as “National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week”; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States and interested groups to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate support for Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

SENATE RESOLUTION 373—MARKING THE 4-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEVASTATION OF PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS BY HURRICANE MARIA

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

S. RES. 373

Whereas, on September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico;

Whereas Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands were still recovering from a direct hit by Hurricane Irma when Hurricane Maria made landfall just 14 days later;

Whereas, on September 20, 2021, the people of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands living on the islands, as well as those living in the mainland United States, will commemorate the 4-year anniversary of Hurricane Maria;

Whereas, after the Great Galveston Hurricane of 1900, Hurricane Maria is the second deadliest storm recorded in United States history;

Whereas the people of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands living in both the mainland United States and on the islands of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands have shown an incredible and resilient spirit in rebuilding after their record losses;

Whereas Puerto Rico faced one of the longest blackouts in United States history, during which millions of residents were left without power and basic services for nearly a year, triggering crises of physical and mental health, migration, housing, and infrastructure;

Whereas, 4 years since Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico, the electrical grid in Puerto Rico remains unreliable, leaving millions of people without a secure source of power as they suffer intermittent brownouts and blackouts;

Whereas, due to the impacts of Hurricanes Maria and Irma, thousands of people in Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands still have blue tarps over their roofs;

Whereas, as a result of Hurricane Maria, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans were uprooted, and some Puerto Ricans have relocated to the mainland United States;

Whereas, due to unaddressed damage to homes in Puerto Rico, hundreds of Puerto Ricans displaced by Hurricane Maria continue to need housing assistance from the territorial government and the Federal Government;

Whereas the economic health of Puerto Rico continues to waiver as the preexisting debt crisis was exacerbated by the impact of Hurricane Maria;

Whereas Hurricane Maria is the third most costly tropical cyclone in United States his-

tory, with damages estimated at \$98,100,000,000;

Whereas the Federal Government has allocated approximately \$71,000,000,000 in disaster-relief funding to help the people of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands rebuild from other disasters that have impacted the islands since Hurricane Maria;

Whereas, in Puerto Rico, the official death toll from Hurricane Maria stands at 2,975 victims, although some academic estimates place the toll at 4,645;

Whereas many of the underlying vulnerabilities contributing to the massive death toll in Puerto Rico are still present, including an underfunded healthcare system and a shortage of medical physicians and specialists;

Whereas the residents of Vieques, Puerto Rico, which number more than 8,000, lost the primary hospital and do not have an adequate and comprehensive healthcare facility;

Whereas, in a September 2020 report, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security found that the Federal Emergency and Management Agency (in this preamble referred to as “FEMA”) mismanaged the distribution of commodities in response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in Puerto Rico;

Whereas FEMA lost visibility of approximately 38 percent of its commodity shipments to Puerto Rico, worth an estimated \$257,000,000;

Whereas, in an April 2021 report, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Housing and Urban Development found that the administration of President Donald Trump created bureaucratic hurdles that delayed approximately \$20,000,000,000 in hurricane disaster recovery and mitigation funds to Puerto Rico;

Whereas Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands continue to battle with climate change, which has intensified tropical cyclones, rising temperatures, coastal erosion, droughts, and flash floods, among other climate events;

Whereas Puerto Rico continues to address and respond to other disasters, including the earthquakes of 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas millions of Puerto Ricans and Virgin Islanders still grapple with the physical, emotional, and economic damages caused by Hurricanes Maria and Irma: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) remains steadfast in its commitment to the people of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands to assist in restoring the islands to their full potential; and

(2) resolutely assures that it will not abandon the plight of—

(A) the millions of citizens of the United States living in Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands; and

(B) the citizens of the United States who have relocated from Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands to the mainland United States in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

SENATE RESOLUTION 374—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 19 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 25, 2021, AS “NATIONAL ESTUARIES WEEK”

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. KING, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr.

WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 374

Whereas estuary regions cover only 13 percent of the land area in the continental United States but contain nearly 43 percent of the population, 40 percent of the jobs, and nearly 50 percent of the economic output of the United States;

Whereas the oceans, estuaries, and Great Lakes of the United States continue to fuel economic growth across the United States, which is evidenced by the fact that, by 2016—

(1) employment levels in economic sectors relating to oceans and estuaries had increased by 14.5 percent from employment levels in those sectors in 2007, before the Great Recession; and

(2) the average employment level of the entire economy of the United States had increased by 4.8 percent from that employment level in 2007, before the Great Recession;

Whereas, between 2015 and 2016, economic sectors relating to estuaries, oceans, and Great Lakes in the United States—

(1) created 85,000 new jobs;

(2) employed 3,300,000 individuals; and

(3) contributed \$124,000,000,000 to the gross domestic product of the United States;

Whereas, by 2018, the ocean economy supported 2,300,000 jobs in the United States, and the compensation paid to employees in such sector was \$161,900,000,000;

Whereas the commercial and recreational fishing industries support more than 1,740,000 jobs in the United States;

Whereas, in 2017—

(1) commercial and recreational saltwater fishing in the United States generated more than \$244,000,000,000 in sales and contributed \$110,700,000,000 to the gross domestic product of the United States;

(2) angler trip expenditures totaled nearly \$10,500,000,000; and

(3) saltwater recreational fishing supported 487,000 jobs, generated \$73,800,000,000 in sales across the United States, and contributed \$41,500,000,000 to the gross domestic product of the United States;

Whereas estuaries provide vital habitats for—

(1) countless species of fish and wildlife, including more than 68 percent of the commercial fish catch in the United States by value and 80 percent of the recreational fish catch in the United States by weight; and

(2) many species that are listed as threatened or endangered species;

Whereas estuaries provide critical ecosystem services that protect human health and public safety, including water filtration, flood control, shoreline stabilization, erosion prevention, and the protection of coastal communities during hurricanes, storms, and other extreme weather events;

Whereas, by the 1980s, the United States had already lost more than 50 percent of the wetlands that existed in the original 13 colonies;

Whereas some bays in the United States that were once filled with fish and oysters have become dead zones filled with excess nutrients, chemical waste, and marine debris;

Whereas harmful algal blooms are hurting fish, wildlife, and human health and are causing serious ecological and economic harm to some estuaries;

Whereas changes in sea levels can affect estuarine water quality and estuarine habitats;

Whereas section 320 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330) (commonly known as the “Clean Water Act”) authorizes the development of comprehensive conservation and management plans to en-

sure that the designated uses of estuaries are protected and to restore and maintain—

(1) the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of estuaries;

(2) water quality;

(3) a balanced indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife; and

(4) recreational activities in estuaries;

Whereas the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.) provides that the policy of the United States is to preserve, protect, develop, and, if possible, restore or enhance the resources of the coastal zone of the United States, including estuaries, for current and future generations;

Whereas 29 coastal and Great Lakes States and territories of the United States operate or contain a National Estuary Program or a National Estuarine Research Reserve;

Whereas scientific study leads to a better understanding of the benefits of estuaries to human and ecological communities;

Whereas the Federal Government, State, local, and Tribal governments, national and community organizations, and individuals work together to effectively manage the estuaries of the United States;

Whereas estuary restoration efforts restore natural infrastructure in local communities in a cost-effective manner, helping to create jobs and reestablish the natural functions of estuaries that yield countless benefits; and

Whereas the week of September 19 through September 25, 2021, is recognized as “National Estuaries Week” to increase awareness among all people of the United States, including Federal Government and State, local, and Tribal government officials, about the importance of healthy estuaries and the need to protect and restore estuaries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of September 19 through September 25, 2021, as “National Estuaries Week”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Estuaries Week;

(3) acknowledges the importance of estuaries to sustaining employment in the United States and the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States;

(4) recognizes that persistent threats undermine the health of estuaries;

(5) applauds the work of national and community organizations and public partners that promote public awareness, understanding, protection, and restoration of estuaries;

(6) supports the scientific study, preservation, protection, and restoration of estuaries; and

(7) expresses the intent of the Senate to continue working to understand, protect, and restore the estuaries of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 375—SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTION, ASSISTANCE, AND SOLUTIONS FOR VENEZUELAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 375

Whereas the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis represents the largest recorded displacement crisis in the Western Hemisphere, with over 5,400,000 Venezuelans displaced outside of their home country as of November 2020;

Whereas one-third of Venezuelans are food insecure, with the greatest impacts on children, pregnant women, and the elderly, according to the World Food Program;

Whereas femicides in Venezuela have increased significantly in recent years due to rises in criminal violence, intimate partner violence, human trafficking, endemic corruption, and lack of accountability for criminal offenses;

Whereas the dire state of Venezuela’s public health system, including extremely high maternal and infant mortality rates, has compelled women and girls to flee the country to give birth;

Whereas a 2019 report from the United Nations Population Fund stated that 95 in every 1,000 births in Venezuela from 2003 to 2018 were to mothers aged 15 to 19;

Whereas women and girls fleeing Venezuela face grave threats of sexual violence, exploitation, and trafficking by armed groups operating in border regions, such as the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN).

Whereas, after fleeing the horrors in Venezuela, Venezuelan refugees and migrants face additional challenges, including lack of access to safe shelter, jobs, documentation, healthcare, and increased restrictions on freedom of movement;

Whereas governments in Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the regional coordination forum, the “Quito Process,” issued a joint declaration in November 2019 committing to strengthen measures against human trafficking, gender-based violence, discrimination, and xenophobia, and to establish a regional protection protocol for Venezuelan refugee and migrant children and adolescents;

Whereas, on February 8, 2021, the Government of Colombia provided Temporary Protected Status to eligible Venezuelans in Colombia—providing them temporary legal status and work authorization for a period of 10 years;

Whereas, on March 8, 2021, the United States designated Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status and provided Deferred Enforced Departure for eligible Venezuelans on January 19, 2021;

Whereas the United States has committed to strengthen international protection of women and children through the United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, which aims to “promote the protection of women and girls’ human rights; access to humanitarian assistance; and safety from violence, abuse, and exploitation around the world,” as well as through the United States Government Strategy on Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity; and

Whereas the United States has prioritized addressing the issue of gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts by establishing a Safe from the Start initiative, implemented by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses grave concern for the massive and growing humanitarian needs of Venezuelans, including over 5,400,000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants, with particular concern for the impact of the displacement crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic on women and children;

(2) recognizes the many communities across Latin America and the Caribbean that continue to generously receive and host Venezuelan refugees and migrants while also fighting to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic;

(3) commends the efforts of the Government of Colombia for granting Temporary Protected Status to Venezuelans, and calls on other refugee-hosting countries to consider similar protections for Venezuelans;

(4) appreciates the participation in the Quito Process of the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay, and encourages implementation of their commitments to strengthen national processes of documentation and registration and to bolster protections for Venezuelan refugees and migrants subject to gender-based violence, human trafficking, and xenophobia;

(5) encourages governments hosting Venezuelan refugees and migrants, as well as international and nongovernmental organizations providing assistance, to ensure that health care, including mental health, shelter, food assistance, and other basic services are increasingly accessible to women and children;

(6) calls on the international community, including both humanitarian and development actors, to focus greater attention and resources to address the violence, abuse, and exploitation suffered by Venezuelan women and children, including by disaggregating data by sex and age in needs assessments and program reporting;

(7) supports increasing United States diplomatic initiatives and humanitarian assistance to strengthen protections for Venezuelan refugees and migrants and their host communities, with an emphasis on the protection of women and children; and

(8) underscores the need for Venezuelan women to participate in efforts to restore democratic governance and address the complex humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

SENATE RESOLUTION 376—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 19 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 25, 2021, AS “GOLD STAR FAMILIES REMEMBRANCE WEEK”

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself, Mr. WARNOCK, and Mr. BRAUN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 376

Whereas the last Sunday in September—

(1) is designated as “Gold Star Mother’s Day” under section 111 of title 36, United States Code; and

(2) was first designated as “Gold Star Mother’s Day” under the Joint Resolution entitled “Joint Resolution designating the last Sunday in September as ‘Gold Star Mother’s Day’, and for other purposes”, approved June 23, 1936 (49 Stat. 1895);

Whereas there is no date dedicated to families affected by the loss of a loved one who died in service to the United States;

Whereas a gold star symbolizes a family member who died in the line of duty while serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas the members and veterans of the Armed Forces, through their service, bear the burden of protecting the freedom of the people of the United States;

Whereas the selfless example of the service of the members and veterans of the Armed Forces, as well as the sacrifices made by the families of those individuals, inspires all individuals in the United States to sacrifice and work diligently for the good of the United States; and

Whereas the sacrifices of the families of the fallen members of the Armed Forces and the families of veterans of the Armed Forces should never be forgotten: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of September 19 through September 25, 2021, as “Gold Star Families Remembrance Week”;

(2) honors and recognizes the sacrifices made by—

(A) the families of members of the Armed Forces who made the ultimate sacrifice in order to defend freedom and protect the United States; and

(B) the families of veterans of the Armed Forces; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Gold Star Families Remembrance Week by—

(A) performing acts of service and good will in their communities; and

(B) celebrating families in which loved ones made the ultimate sacrifice so that others could continue to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to S. 2610, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability Fund, and for other purposes, dated September 21, 2021, for the reasons stated in the RECORD.

Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request relating to the passage of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (S. 2610), a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have made every effort to promote greater awareness and flexibility for whistleblowers that wanted to bring their concerns to any member of the legislative branch. Unfortunately, this bill does the opposite, and it further codifies existing standard practices within the several intelligence agencies to limit whistleblower access. This bill would allow whistleblowers with intelligence equities to bring their concerns directly to Congress. But instead of allowing whistleblowers to bring their concerns to any Committee of jurisdiction, it limits the Committees a whistleblower can bring their concerns to only the House and Senate Intelligence Committees. If the goal of this legislation is expanding whistleblower protections, then whistleblowers should be given more avenues, not fewer. This means allowing them to report instances of wrongdoing to any committee of jurisdiction.

I also have particular concerns that this legislation may inadvertently roll back protections for FBI employees that under current law, can bring their concerns to any member of Congress. Under the FBI Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, which Congress passed unanimously in 2016, FBI whistleblowers can bring their concerns directly to any member of Congress. This

bill would instead require FBI whistleblowers with Intel equities to bring their concerns exclusively to the Intelligence Committees.

In some instances this may be a good option for some whistleblowers, as well as the best way to protect national security. However, not all matters that are classified or that involve Intel equities are exclusively Intelligence Committee matters. There are issues that more appropriately fall under another committee’s jurisdiction. For instance, a matter involving Foreign Intelligence Surveillance (FISA) Courts may be more appropriate for the Judiciary committee; likewise a National Security Agency (NSA) matter may be better heard by the Armed Services committees.

This would align with SSCI’s founding documents which make it clear that its jurisdiction does not supersede, or take away from, any other committee’s jurisdiction.

For these reasons, I request to be notified before any unanimous consent agreement is agreed to regarding S. 2610, as I intend to object unless the bill was joined with an amendment that would:

1. Change the mandatory reporting to the House/Senate Select Committees on Intelligence to committees of Jurisdiction.

2. Add a disclaimer that clarifies that, when codified, that this bill would not place additional restrictions on whistleblowers with intel related equities and that they retain all of their other rights under other federal whistleblower laws.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have 9 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TOURISM, TRADE, AND
EXPORT PROMOTION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Subcommittee on Tourism, Trade, and Export Promotion Subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY, PENSIONS,
AND FAMILY POLICY

The Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy of the Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 2:45 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION
POLICY AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

The Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights of the Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

GOLD STAR FAMILIES
REMEMBRANCE WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 376, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 376) designating the week of September 19 through September 25, 2021, as "Gold Star Families Remembrance Week".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 376) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME
EN BLOC—S. 2788 and S. 2789

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2788) to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program.

A bill (S. 2789) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection being heard, the bills will receive their second reading, en bloc, on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it recess until 10 a.m., Wednesday, September 22; that following the prayer and pledge, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following the cloture vote on the Batchelder nomination, that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate immediately vote on cloture on the White nomination; further, that if cloture is invoked on either of the nominations, all postcloture time expire at 2:45 p.m., and the Senate vote in the order in which cloture was invoked; finally, if any nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:17 p.m., recessed until Wednesday, September 22, 2021, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

CARLA RAVI KOPPELL, OF NEW YORK, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE MICHELLE A. BEKKERING.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER SECTION 905 OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) JEFFREY S. SCHEIDT

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination pursuant to S. Res. 27 and the nomination was placed on the Executive Calendar:

ROHIT CHOPRA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate September 21, 2021:

THE JUDICIARY

MARGARET IRENE STRICKLAND, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO.